

*Al-Ghazali's
Ihya' Ulum al-Din*

**REVITALISATION OF THE
SCIENCES OF RELIGION**

(abridged by Abd el Salam Haroun)

Revised and Translated

by

Dr Ahmad A Zidan

Vol. 1



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بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

***IN THE NAME OF GOD, THE MERCIFUL,
THE COMPASSIONATE***

**All Praise be to GOD, the Lord of the Worlds, and
prayers and peace be upon Mohammad His servant
and Messenger.**

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Professor Dr Ahmad A Zidan

Dr Ahmad Zidan was born on Monday 1st Ramadhan 1360 H in Egypt, to a family from the house of Enan (Al Enan) who are direct descendants of Umar Ibn El Khattab, through his son Abd Allah Ibn Umar and his wife the daughter of El Hassan Ibn Ali ibn Abi Taleb and Fatimah Al Zahra'a (may Allah be pleased with them) the daughter of the Prophet Mohamed(1)(pbuh). Dr Zidan's ancestors came to Egypt from Al Madinah Al Munawwarah during the reign of Yazeed Ibn Mua'wia Ibn Abu Suffian.

(1)(According to the officially certified documents and to the legal records of the Court of Mansoura dated 10th ZulQadah 1148 H. and 18th Shawwal 1180 H. and the record of the Court of Al Malik Al Saleh Cairo dated 13th Shawwal 1192 H. and the report of the Committee of Amir Sulayman Al Razzaz approved in 1200 H. and to the historical record of Al Manawi, Al Sakhawi and Ali Pasha Mubarak. Also according to the findings of genealogist Dr Mohamed Galal.)

He grew up in a family of renowned religious scholars and was endowed from an early age with a great sense of affinity for his religion, his grandfather, a eminent religious scholar of his time, taught him the Qur'an which he memorised by the age of ten. It was also his grandfather who instilled in him his strong sense of adherence to Islam which served him well during the years he studied and traveled abroad.

Dr Ahmad Zidan received his early education in Egypt and undertook higher studies at universities in Europe and the U.S.A, obtaining his Ph.D. 1966.(Har), D.Sc. 1969.(Gen) He has lectured at universities throughout the U.S.A. and Europe. He is a Professor of International Relations at the Institut Universitaire De Hautes Etudes International and has been playing an important role for several years in international affairs with special emphasis on the Gulf region's policies.

Dr Ahmad Zidan is the Chairman of Muslim World Organisation, World Headquarters, based in England, U.K.

His other major works include:-

- * Translation of the Glorious Qur'an**
- * Comparative Religion**
- * The West's Arrogance Matched Only By It's Ignorance**
- * World Arrogance**
- * The Intrigues Of Ignorance**
- * Christianity Myth or Message?**
- * Effects of Interference in World Politics**
- * Concepts and Methods in International Relations**
- * Foreign Policy Analysis**
- * Strategic Studies**
- * Battles of the Prophet**

INTRODUCTION

In the Name of God, the Merciful, the Compassionate

“Whatever the Messenger gives you, accept it, and whatever he forbids you, desist from it.” (Surah 59 verse 7)

First, I praise God, continuously though the praise of the fervent does not do justice to His Glory.

Second, I invoke the blessing of God upon His Messenger, peace and prayers be upon him, the master of mankind, and upon all the Messengers.

Third, I ask His help having resolved to write a book on the revival of the religious sciences.

Fourth, I proceed to enlighten you, who are the most self-righteous of those who reject belief, and you, who are the most immoderate of the thoughtless unbelievers.

I am no longer obliged to remain silent, because the responsibility to speak, as well as warn you, has been imposed upon me by your persistent straying from the clear truth, and by your insistence upon fostering evil, flattering ignorance, and stirring up opposition against him who, in order to conform to the dictates of knowledge, deviates from custom and the established practice of men. In doing this he fulfills God's prescriptions for purifying the self and reforming the heart, thus somewhat redeeming a life, which has already been dissipated in despair of prevention and remedy, and avoids by it the company of him whom the Lawgiver (Mohammad peace and prayers be upon him) described when he said: “The most severely punished of all men on the Day of Resurrection will be a learned man whom God has not blessed with His knowledge.” For, by my life, there is no reason for your abiding arrogance except the malady which has become an epidemic among the multitudes. That malady consists in not discerning this matter's importance, the gravity of the problem, and the seriousness of the crisis; in not seeing that life is wan-

ing and that what is to come is close at hand, that death is imminent but that the journey is still long, that the provisions are scanty, the dangers great, and the road blocked. The perceptive know that only knowledge and works devoted to God avail.

To tread the crowded and dangerous path of the Hereafter with neither guide nor companion is difficult, tiring, and strenuous. The guides for the road are the learned men who are the heirs of the Prophet (peace and prayers be upon him), but the times are void of them now and only the superficial are left, most of whom have been lured by iniquity and overcome by Satan. everyone of them was so wrapped up in his immediate fortune that he came to see good as evil and evil as good, so that the science of the religion disappeared and the torch of the true faith was extinguished all over the world. They duped the people into believing that there was no knowledge except such ordinances of government as the judges use to settle disputes when the mob riots; or the type of argument which the proud display in order to confuse and refute; or the elaborate and flowery language with which the preacher seeks to lure the common people. They did this because, apart from these three, they could find no other ways to snare illegal profit and riches of the world. On the other hand the science of the path of the Hereafter, which our fore-fathers trod and which includes what God in His Book called law, wisdom, knowledge, enlightenment, light, guidance and righteousness, h vanished from among mankind and been completely forgotten. Since this is a calamity afflicting religion and a grave crisis overshadowing it, I have therefore deemed it important to engage in the writing of this book; to revive the science of religion, to bring to light the exemplary lives of the departed immans, and to show what branches of knowledge the prophets and the virtuous fathers regarded as useful.

I have divided the work into four parts or quarters. These are: the Acts of Worship, the Customs of Life, the Destructive Matters in Life, and the Saving Matters in Life. I have begun the work with the Book of Knowledge because it is of the utmost importance to determine first of all the

knowledge which God has, through His Messenger, ordered the elite to seek. This is shown by the words of the Messenger of God when he said: “Seeking knowledge is an ordinance obligatory upon every Muslim.” Furthermore, I have begun with Book of Knowledge in order to distinguish between useful and harmful knowledge, as the Prophet (peace and prayers be upon him) said: “We seek refuge in God from useless knowledge.” and also to show the deviation of the people of this age from right conduct, their delusion as by a glistening mirage, and their satisfaction with the husks of knowledge rather than the pith.

The quarter on the Acts of Worship comprises ten books:-

1. The Book of Knowledge
2. The Articles of Faith
3. The Mysteries of Purity
4. The Mysteries of Prayer
5. The Mysteries of Almsgiving
6. The Mysteries of Fasting
7. The Mysteries of the Pilgrimage
8. The Rules of Reading the Qur'an
9. On Invocations and Supplications
10. On the Office of Potions

The quarter of Customs comprises ten books:-

1. The Ethics of Eating
2. The Ethics of Marriage
3. The Ethics of Earning a Livelihood
4. On the Lawful and the Unlawful
5. The Ethics of Companionship and Fellowship with the Various Types of People
6. On Seclusion

7. The Ethics of Travel
 8. On Audition and Emotion
 9. On Enjoining Good and Forbidding Evil
 10. The Ethics of Living as Exemplified in the Virtues of the Prophet
- The quarter on the Destructive Matters of Life comprises ten books:-***

1. On the Wonders of the Heart
2. On the Discipline of the Soul
3. The Breaking of the Two Desires
4. The Evil of the Tongue
5. The Condemnation of Anger, Rancour and Envy
6. The Condemnation of Worldliness
7. The Condemnation of Miserliness and Love of Wealth
8. The Condemnation of Prestige and Hypocrisy
9. The Condemnation of Pride and Conceit
10. The Condemnation of Vanity

The quarter on the Saving Matters of Life comprises ten books:-

1. On Repentance
2. On Patience and Gratitude
3. On Fear and Hope
4. On Poverty and Asceticism
5. On Divine Unity and Dependence
6. On Love, Longing, Intimacy and Contentment
7. On Intentions, Truthfulness and Sincerity
8. On Self-Examination and Self Accounting
9. On Meditation
10. On Death

In the quarter on the Acts of Worship I shall mention some of the hidden elements of its meanings. These, the active learned person badly needs, without their knowledge no one will be versed in the science of the Hereafter. Most of this information has been neglected in theological studies.

In the quarter on the Customs of Life I shall deal with the rules of practical religion current among men, its deep mysteries, intricate technique, and the piety concealed in its rules of conduct, which no religious person can do without.

In the quarter on the Destructive Matter of Life I shall enumerate every abhorred trait whose exposure the Qur'an has ordered, as well as dealing with the purifying of the soul and the cleansing of the heart from them. Under every one of these straits I shall give its definition, the truth about it, its origin, its evil consequences, its symptoms, and finally its treatment. To all this will be added illustrations from the Qur'an, tradition, and antiquity.

In the quarter on the Saving Matters of Life, I shall enumerate every praiseworthy trait and every one of the desirable qualities of God's favourites (al-muqarrabun) and the saints, by means of which the slave seeks to draw near to the Lord of the Universe. Similarly, under every quality I shall give its definition, the truth about it, its origin, its fruit, the sign by which it is known, its excellence which renders it desirable, together with examples to illustrate it from the fields of law and reason.

It is true that men have written several works on some of these aspects, but this one differs from them in five ways:-

First, by clarifying what they have obscured and elucidating what they have treated casually.

Second, by arranging what they have disarranged, and organising what they have scattered.

Third, by ensuring what they have elaborated, and correcting what they have approved.

Fourth, by deleting what they have repeated (and verifying what they have set down).

Fifth, by determining ambiguous matters which have hitherto been unintelligible and never dealt with in any work. For, although all have followed one course, there is no reason why one should not proceed independently and bring to light something unknown, paying special attention to what his colleagues have forgotten. It is possible that such obscure things are noticed, but mention of them in writing is overlooked. Or, again, it may not be a case of overlooking them, but rather one of being prevented from exposing them.

These, therefore, are the characteristics of this work which comprises the aggregate of the (previously enumerated) sciences. Two things have induced me to divide the work into four quarters. The first and original motive is that such an arrangement in research and exposition is imperative because the science by which we approach the Hereafter is divided into the science of revelation and the science of practical religion. By the science of revelation I mean knowledge and only knowledge. By the science of practical religion I mean knowledge as well as action in accordance with that knowledge. This work will deal only with the science of practical religion, and not with revelation, which one is not permitted to record in writing, although it is the ultimate aim of saints and the desire of the eyes of the sincere. The science of practical religion is merely a path which leads to revelation and only through that path did the Prophets of God communicate with the people and lead them to Him. Concerning revelation itself, the Prophets spoke only figuratively and briefly through signs and symbols, because they realised the inability of man's mind to comprehend. Therefore since the learned men are heirs of the Prophets, they cannot but follow in their footsteps and emulate their way.

Furthermore, the science of practical religion is divided into outward science, by which is meant that of the functions of the senses, and inward science, by which is meant that of the functions of the heart. The bodily organs perform either acts of worship or usages of life, while the heart, because it is removed from the senses and belongs to the world of

dominion, is subject to either praiseworthy or blameworthy (influences). Inevitably, therefore, this science divides itself into two parts - outward and inward. The outward, which pertains to the senses, is subdivided into acts of worship and customs of life; the inward, which relates to the conditions of the heart and the qualities of the soul, is subdivided into things which are praiseworthy and things which are objectionable. Together these constitute the four parts of the science of practical religion, a classification objected to by none.

My second motive for adopting this division is that I have noticed that the interests of students in jurisprudence (which has, for the sake of boasting and exploiting its influence and prestige in arguments, become popular among those who do not fear God) is genuine. It is also divided into quarters. And since he who dresses as the beloved will also be beloved, I am not far wrong in deeming that the modeling of this book after books of jurisprudence will prove to be a clever move in creating interest in it. For this same reason, one of those who wanted to attract the attention of the authorities to (the science of) medicine, modeled it after astronomical lists, arranging it in tables and numbers, and called (his book) Tables of Health. He did this in order that their interest in that (latter) type (of study) might help in drawing them to read it. Ingenuity in drawing hearts to the science which is good for spiritual life is, however, more important than that of interesting them in medicine which benefits nothing but physical health. The fruit of this science is the treatment of the hearts and souls through which is obtained a life that will persist for ever and ever.

How inferior, then, is the medicine of the body, which is of necessity destined to decay before long. Therefore, we beg God for help to lead us to the right path and the way of truth, indeed He is the Generous, the all Bounteous.

*The Quarter on the
Acts of Worship*

The First Book
The Book of Knowledge
Kitab al-Ilm
Comprising Seven Chapters
Chapter One
The Value of Knowledge, Instruction, and
Learning together with its evidence in tradi-
tion and from reason

The excellence of Knowledge

The evidence of the excellence of knowledge in the Qur'an is revealed to us by God Almighty :-

God bears witness that there is no god but He, and so do the angels and those who possess knowledge, upholding justice... (Qur'an Surah 3 Verse 18)

We see how God Almighty begins by bearing witness for Himself, secondly for the angels and thirdly for those who possess knowledge. In this it is clear that the knowledgeable people are emphasized as holding high rank in the sight of God. As God Almighty said :-

God will raise up in rank those of you who believe and who have been granted knowledge... (Surah 58 verse 11)

God (High Exalted) said :-

Say: "Can those be equal, they who know and they who know not?" (Surah 13 verse 9)

God (High Exalted) also said :-

Surely those of His servants who have knowledge fear God alone. (Surah 35 verse 28)

And God (High Exalted) said :-

Say: "God suffices as a witness between me and you, and whoever possesses knowledge of the Book". (Surah 13 verse 43)

God (High Exalted) also said:-

Said one who possessed knowledge of the Scripture "I will bring it to you in the wink of an eye"...(Surah 27 verse 40). Indicating that he was enabled by the power of knowledge.

As to the evidence of the value of knowledge in tradition (al-akhbar) the Prophet (prayers and peace be upon him) said:- “ If God wants to do good to a person He makes him comprehend the Religion and of course knowledge is attained by learning”.

He also said, “The learned persons are the heirs of the prophets”. It is also well known that there is no rank higher than prophecy, nor is there any honour higher than its inheritance.

And The Prophet (peace and prayers be upon him) also said “Whatever is in the heavens and the earth intercedes for the learned person”. Who could be in a more elevated position than the one for whom the angels of the heavens and earth seek forgiveness?

The Prophet (peace and prayers be upon him) said:- “ The best of persons is the learned believer who, if he is needed, he will be useful; and if dispensed with, he will be self-sufficient” .

He also said:- “ People are like ores of gold and silver, the best of them in the times of (Jahiliyah) before Islam, are also the best in the times Islam, provided they see the light”.

And he also said:- “ The superior rank the learned person holds over the worshiper is similar to the superiority of the moon when it is full over the other stars”.

As the evidence of the value of knowledge in the sayings of the Companions (al-athar), Ali Ibn Abi Talib, (may God be pleased with him) said to Kumail “O Kumail knowledge is better than wealth, you safeguard wealth but knowledge safeguards you. Knowledge is sovereign but wealth is servile, wealth is diminished by expending while knowledge is increased in its expending”.

Abou Al Aswad said: “ Nothing is more precious than knowledge, while kings are sovereign over the people, they are ruled by the learned.”

Ibn Abbas (may God be pleased with them) said: “Solomon the son of David, (peace be upon them) was offered to choose between knowledge, wealth or power, and he chose knowledge, then he was blessed with wealth and power as well”.

Ibn Al Mubarak was asked: “Who constitutes humanity?” He answered: “The learned”. It was then said to him: “And who are the kings?” He answered: “The ascetics”. He was asked: “Who are the ignoble people then?” He answered: “ Those who in the name of religion, grow fat in the world”. Ibn Al Mubarak only regarded the learned as belonging to mankind, because it is knowledge which distinguishes man from the animals. Furthermore, man is a human being, not because of his physical prowess, for physically the camel is his superior; not because of his size because the elephant is larger; nor for his courage because the lion is more courageous than him, not because of his appetite for the ox has the greater.

Al Hassan (may God have mercy upon him) said: “The ink of the learned will be likened to the blood of the martyrs, and the former will prove superior ”.

Salem ibn Abi Al Ja’d said: “My master bought me for 300 Dirhams and later set me free. Then I said what shall I do to support myself? So finally I took up learning and no sooner than a year had passed the Emir of Madinah called upon me, but I would not receive him”.

Al Zuhari (may God have mercy upon him) said: “Knowledge is glorious and is not treasured except by the glorious.”

The Excellence of Learning

The excellence of learning is attested to in the Qur’an by God Almighty :-

God (High Exalted) said:-

.....but a party of every section of them should march forth, to become learned in Religion...(Surah 9 verse 122)

And God (High Exalted) said: ...so ask the people of earlier Scripture, if you do not know. (Surah 21 verse 7)

As to the evidence of the excellence of learning in tradition (al-akhbar) the Prophet (peace and prayers be upon him) said:- “Whoever follows a path in search of knowledge, God will guide him into a path leading into Paradise”.

And the Prophet (peace and prayers be upon him) also said: “Truly the angels will bow low to the one who seeks knowledge in approval of what he does”.

As to the evidence of the excellence of learning in the sayings of the Companions (al-athar), Ibn Abbas (may God be pleased with them) said: “I was humbled when I sought knowledge, then I was elevated when the people sought knowledge from me”.

And he also said: “I would rather spend a part of the night in learned discussion than in continual prayer.”

Abou El Darda’a said: “To learn something is more favourable to me than to stand all night in prayer”. And he also said: “Be learned or a learner, or one who listens, and do not be the exception or you will be doomed”. He said: “Whoever sees that striving for knowledge is not a Jihad, his mind and opinion are lacking”.

The Excellence of Teaching

The excellence of teaching is supported in the Qur’an, God Almighty said: “...and to warn their people when they return back to them, that they should guard themselves against evil”. (Surah 9 verse 122)

The object is teaching and advice,

God Almighty said: And when God took Covenant with those who were given earlier Scripture, “You shall certainly make it known to all

people, and you shall not conceal it..." (Surah 3 Verse 187)

It is an obligation to teach.

God High Exalted said: "Call mankind to the Way of your Lord with wisdom and sound advice, and reason with them in a well mannered way... (Surah 16 verse 125)

As to the evidence of the excellence of teaching in tradition (al-akhbar) the Prophet said to Mo'az (may God be pleased with him) when he sent him to Yemen: "That God guides one person through you, it is better for you than the world and all that is in it".

The Prophet (prayers and peace be upon him) said :-

"God does not take away knowledge, by taking it away from (the hearts of) the people, but takes it away by the death of the religious learned men till none of them (religious learned men) remain, then people will take as their leaders ignorant persons who when consulted will give their verdict without knowledge. So they will go astray and will lead the people astray "

The Prophet (prayers and peace be upon him) said :-

"The example of guidance and knowledge with which God has sent me is like abundant rain falling on the earth, some of which was fertile soil that absorbed rain water and brought forth vegetation and grass in abundance. (And) another portion of it was hard and held the rain water and God benefited the people with it and they utilized it for drinking, making their animals drink from it and for irrigation of the land for cultivation. (And) a portion of it barren which could neither hold the water nor bring forth vegetation (then that land did not give any benefits). The first is an example of the person who comprehends God's religion and gets benefit from the knowledge which God has revealed through me (the Prophet) and the second an example of a person who learns and then teaches others. The last example is that of a person who does not care for it and does not take God's guidance revealed through me (He is like that barren land).

As to the evidence of the excellence of teaching in the sayings of the Companions (al-athar),

Umar (may God be pleased with him) said :

“Whoever relates a Hadith (Tradition) and thus induces someone to act according to it, will be rewarded himself and rewarded the equivalent reward for those who acted according to that Hadith”.

Ibn Abbas (may God be pleased with them) said: The one who teaches people good, all things seek forgiveness for him, even the whales in the sea.

Ata'a (may God be pleased with him) said:- “ I came upon Saeed Ibn El-Musayyab and found him crying, I asked him why are you crying?” He answered:- “Because no one seeks from me any knowledge.”

It has also been said:- The learned are the shining Luminaries of all time, each one is the luminary of his time which illuminates his generation.

Chapter Two

On Praiseworthy and Blameworthy Branches of Knowledge, their classifications, and the rules which govern them

The explanation of those branches of knowledge whose acquisition is deemed *Fard ayn* (individual duty) as well as those whose acquisition is deemed *Fard kifayah* (collective duty); on determining the position of theology and fiqh (jurisprudence in Islam) in relation to the science of Religion; and, finally, on showing the superiority of the science of the Hereafter.

On Knowledge whose acquisition is deemed Fard Ayn (Individual Duty)

The Messenger of God said: "Seeking knowledge is an ordinance obligatory on every Muslim," and also, "Seek knowledge even if it is from China." People, however disagreed as to what branch of knowledge man is obliged to acquire, and as a result split up into about twenty groups. We shall not go into details but simply summarise the matter by saying that each group insisted on the necessity of acquiring that branch of knowledge which happened to be its speciality. The scholastic theologians insisted on scholastic theology because the unity of God, as well as His Essence and Attributes, is known through it. The Jurists held out for jurisprudence because the acts of worship, the lawful and the unlawful as well as the forbidden and the permissible in daily conduct, are determined through it. Furthermore, the commentators and traditionalists, holding that through it all sciences are attained, stood for the science of the Qur'an and the Tradition. The Sufis pointed to Sufism as the branch of knowledge which was intended, some saying that it is the science whereby the creature, realising his position in relation to the divine, has a mystical experience (in communion with God). Other Sufis said that it comprises knowing what sincerity is and what the afflictions of the soul are, as well as being able to distinguish between the followers of God and

the followers of Satan. Others again said that it was the esoteric science whose acquisition was required only of the qualified, select few, and accordingly they dismissed the accepted meaning of the word in favour of its esoteric connotation.

According to Abou Talib al-Makki, what is meant (by the above mentioned tradition) is knowledge of the contents of Tradition which embodies the foundations of Islam, referred to in the following words of the Prophet (peace and prayers be upon him): "Islam is built upon five pillars." Since these five pillars are ordinances imposed by God, it is necessary to know how to fulfill them. The student therefore, should be absolutely certain that knowledge, as we have already shown in the introduction to this book, is divided into the science of practical religion and the science of revelations. The scope of this discussion is confined to the science of practical religion.

The (tenets of) practical religion which an adult and sane creature is obliged to observe deals with three things: beliefs, works and prohibitions (*tark*, pl. *turuk*). For example, when a sane individual attains puberty and comes of age, his first obligations is learning the two words of the confession of faith (*al shahadah*) and understanding their meaning. These two words are: 'There is no god but God; Mohammad is the Prophet of God.' He is not required to fully penetrate their significance through scrutiny, investigation and research, but only to believe and confess them unequivocally without the least doubt or hesitation. The latter is obtained by merely accepting on authority without any investigation or proof, since the Prophet (peace and prayers be upon him) required only mere acceptance and confession from the ruffians among the Arabs without their learning any evidence. Thus in accepting and confessing the two words, the person fulfills an obligation which is binding at that time. Accordingly, at that time, the branch of knowledge, whose acquisition is divinely ordained and binding upon every Muslim, would consist in the learning and understanding of the two words of the confession of faith. Furthermore, at that stage it is sufficient for them. This is shown by con-

sidering that if a Muslim dies upon accepting and confessing the two words of the confession of faith, he would die obedient to God and be guilty of no rebellion. With the rise of new developments, however, there would be other obligations, but they would not necessarily be binding on every individual. On the contrary, it would be quite possible (for some) to be free of them.

The new developments may affect obligations regarding works, prohibitions or beliefs.

Regarding works, for example, if a person's life were to extend from dawn until noon, he would be required to learn how to perform his ablutions and pray because of the approaching noon hour. In such a case it would be wrong to say that it is obvious that he should persist in his study; (and if he finds that his life will extend beyond noon) and thinks that he might not be able to finish in time, (he should still persist) and perform his ablutions and pray before evening, however long this may be after the appointed hour. In short he should give study primary consideration regardless of the time required. In addition it can be said that the obligation to acquire knowledge, which is the prerequisite for works, is derived from the obligation to perform works, in which case it might not even be obligatory before sunset. This is also true of the other prayers.

Further, should a person live until (the beginning of) Ramadan, he would be obliged to learn all about fasting, i.e., that it lasts from morning until sunset, that observing it requires resolve, abstinence from food, drink and sexual intercourse as well as seeing the new moon personally (or accepting the word of two eye witnesses instead). Similarly, should a person come into some wealth, or on coming of age, inherit some, he should learn all about zakah. For, although fulfilling the obligation is not immediately incumbent upon him, it would become so at the end of the first year after his acceptance of Islam. Should he possess nothing but camels, he would not need to learn the zakah of sheep, and the same is true of other varieties (of wealth).

When, however, the months of pilgrimage begin, it will not be necessary for the person to start at once, to learn how to make the Pilgrimage; and since it is performed at leisure, learning how to do it is not immediately obligatory. Rather the learned men of Islam should point out to him that the pilgrimage is a divine ordinance to be observed, at leisure and convenience, by everyone who, as a man of means, has both the provisions and the means of transportation. This should be done in the hope of inducing the individual himself to resolve upon the pilgrimage. Should he so resolve, it would become necessary for him to learn how the pilgrimage is performed. He would not need, however, to learn anything except its essentials and duties and not the voluntary acts of supererogation connected with it; for, if performing the voluntary acts is supererogatory, so would its knowledge also be, and learning it, consequently, would not be a divine ordinance binding on all Muslims. (As to the unlawfulness of neglecting to point out that the pilgrimage is obligatory whenever the individual is able to perform it, there has been considerable speculation worthy of nothing but jurisprudence.) The same reasoning applies to the knowledge of the other works which are divinely ordained and binding on all Muslims.

As to prohibitions, the acquisition of the knowledge of which is obligatory, the obligation is conditioned by the rise of new developments and changed circumstances relevant to it, and varies with the conditions of the individual. Thus the mute is obliged to know what is unlawful in speech nor the blind to know what things are unlawful to see. Similarly the Bedouin is not obliged to know the houses in which it is unlawful to sit. All these obligations only apply within the limits of circumstance, and need not be learned when it is certain that the question (of their applicability) will not arise. But whatever situations resemble these and may, therefore, be confused with them must be distinguished from them - as, for example, the case where an individual who, at the time of his embracing Islam, was in the habit of wearing silk garments, or possessed something illegally, or looked at a woman whom he could not legally marry. In such a case, he should be warned. On the other hand, whatever

does not resemble these things and is, therefore, not confusing but to which one may be exposed through contact - such as food and drink - instruction concerning it is obligatory. Hence if an individual happens to be in a town where it is customary to drink wine and eat pork, it is imperative that he be taught concerning their prohibition and warned against using them. Moreover, of all things in which instruction is obligatory, acquiring a knowledge of them is also obligatory.

As to beliefs and actions of the heart, knowledge of them is obligatory according to the state of the mind. Thus if one should feel any passing thought (khatir) as to what the two words of the confession of faith mean, it would be obligatory upon him to acquire the knowledge of whatever would remove that doubt. If, on the other hand, he felt no such passing thought but died before he believed that the word of God - the Qur'an - is eternal, visible and not a substratum for originated properties, as well as other often repeated articles of faith, he would have died a professing Muslim. These feelings of doubt which render the knowledge of the articles of faith obligatory arise in the mind either naturally or as a result of hearing things in one's own community. Thus in a town where rumours have spread and the people talk heresy, the individual should, in the early years of his maturity, be protected against such influence by being instructed in the elements of truth. If on the other hand, he were exposed to falsehood, it would become necessary to remove it from his heart, a task which might prove difficult. Again, if this particular Muslim were a merchant living in the midst of a town where the practice of usury was prevalent, it would be obligatory to warn him against usury.

This, then, is the truth concerning the knowledge whose acquisition is deemed an ordinance of God binding on everyone and no less binding on some because of its observance by others. The gist of it all is knowledge of how to perform works whose discharge is obligatory. Whoever, therefore, knows what works are obligatory together with the time of their discharge, the same possesses the knowledge whose acquisition is fard ayn. Furthermore, what the Sufis hold relative to the understanding of the

thoughts of the enemy and those of the company of heaven (lummat al-mulk) is also true, though only to those who apply themselves to it. If, however, man does not for the most part refrain from the impulses of evil, hypocrisy and envy, he should seek to acquire whatever knowledge he may feel he needs from the 'Quarter of the Destructive Matters of Life'. How can he neglect this obligation when the Messenger of God said: "Three things in life are destructive: sordid avarice, vehement passion and self conceit." And no man can refrain from these. The rest of what we shall mention of the reprehensible conditions of the heart such as pride, conceit, etc., all follow from these three aforementioned destructive matters of life. Their eradication is a fard ayn. It is, however, not possible except through a knowledge of the nature of these destructive matters of life, as well as their causes, symptoms and cure; as the one who does not know evil falls into it. A cure is, in reality, confronting a cause with its opposite. How could such a thing be possible without a knowledge of both cause and effect? Most of the things we have mentioned in the Quarter on the Destructive Matters of Life belong to the fard ayn class which have been totally neglected by the people in favour of pursuing things which do not matter.

Among these things about which (we) should proceed to inform the individual, in case they have not yet been transmitted from one people to another, are belief in Paradise, Hell, the Day of Resurrection, and the Day of Judgment in order that he may believe and accept them, as they are the continuation of the words of the confession of faith. This is required because after the acceptance of Mohammad's Prophethood, the Message which he conveyed, namely, that whoever should obey God and His Messenger would enter Paradise, and whoever should disobey them would enter Hell Fire, should be understood. If, therefore, you would pay attention to this reasoning you would know that this is the true way of life. You would also find out that every servant suffers, in the course of his life, both during the day and the night, from enduring thoughts (waqai) of doubt which befall him in the performance of his acts of worship and daily transactions. These thoughts require new obligations and

consequently it becomes necessary for him to inquire concerning every unusual occurrence which may happen to him as well as to proceed to learn what may be generally expected to occur in the near future.

Finally, if it should become clear that what the Prophet (peace and prayers be upon him) meant by his words: "Seeking knowledge is an ordinance obligatory upon every Muslim," is knowledge with the definite article, namely, the knowledge of only those works which are well known to be obligatory on every Muslim, the line of this reasoning would become apparent as would also the time in which in which these obligations should be discharged. God, however knows best.

On Knowledge whose acquisition is deemed Fard kifayah (Collective Duty)

It should be known that a necessary duty is not distinguished from other duties, except when the different sciences are enumerated. These are divided in relation to the kind of duties we are now considering, into shariyah and profane (ghayr shariyah) sciences. By Shariyah sciences I mean those which have been acquired from the prophets and are not arrived at either by reason, like arithmetic, or by experimentation, like medicine or by hearing, like language.

Profane sciences are divided into praiseworthy (mahmud), blameworthy (madhmum), and permissible (mubah). Praiseworthy sciences are those on whose knowledge the activities of this life depend such as medicine and arithmetic. They are divided into sciences which are fard kifayah and into sciences which are meritorious though not obligatory. Sciences whose knowledge is deemed fard kifayah comprise every science which is indispensable for the welfare of the world such as: medicine which is necessary for the life of the body, arithmetic for daily transactions and the division of legacies and in inheritances, as well as others besides. These are the sciences which, through of their absence, a community would be reduced to narrow straits. But should one who can practice them rise in that community, it would suffice, and the obligation to acquire their knowledge would cease to be binding upon the rest of the community.

No one should be astonished when we say that medicine as well as arithmetic are of the sciences which are fard kifayah, because the fundamental industries are also the same, such as agriculture, weaving, politics, even cupping and tailoring. For should such a town lack a cupper extinction would overtake its people and they would be driven to expose themselves to destruction. Has He Who sent down the ma⁴lady not also sent down the remedy, given guidance for its use, and prepared the means for administering it? It is not, therefore, permissible to expose oneself to destruction by neglecting the remedy.

To go deep into the details of arithmetic and the nature of medicine as well as such details which, while not indispensable, are helpful in reinforcing the efficacy of whatever is necessary, is however, considered meritorious, not obligatory.

The blameworthy (madhmum) sciences are magic, talismanic science, juggling, trickery and the like.

The Shariyah sciences which are intended in the study are all praiseworthy. Sometimes, however, they may be confused with what may be taken for praiseworthy but, in fact, are blameworthy. For this reason Shariyah sciences are divided into praiseworthy and blameworthy sciences.

The praiseworthy sciences comprise sources (*usul*), branches (*furu*), auxiliary (*muqaddimat*), and supplementary (*mutammimat*). There are therefore, four kinds.

First come the sources (*usul*) which are four in number: The Book of God (The Qur'an), The Usage (*sunnah*) of His Prophet, The Agreement (*ijma*) of all Muslims, and The Traditions relating to the Companions (*athar al sahabah*). Agreement, in so far as it evinces usage, is a source. Like traditions relating to the Companions, however, which also evince usage, agreement is a secondary source. This is because the Companions have witnessed the Revelations and have, through their close association with the Prophet (peace and prayers be upon him), comprehended what others have failed to see. Since, however, it is possible that words will

not fully express what has been so comprehended, the learned men have deemed it fit to follow the example of the Companions and hold fast to their traditions though on certain condition and in a special manner as the one concerned may see. It is, however, not appropriate to discuss it in this chapter.

Second are the branches (*furu*). They are what has been drawn from the sources (*usul*), not according to the literal meaning but through meanings which are adduced by the mind thereby widening the understanding until a meaning differing from the literal is indicated, as is, for example, indicated by the words of the Prophet (peace and prayers be upon him): “The judge should not sit in judgment while angry,” namely, that he should not sit in judgment while constipated or hungry or suffering from a painful disease. This last thing may be of two kinds: the first pertains to the activities of this world and is contained in the books of law and entrusted to the lawyers, the learned men of this world; the second pertains to the activities of the Hereafter. It is the science of the conditions of the heart, its praiseworthy and blameworthy characteristics, what is acceptable before God and what is reprehensible to Him.

All these are treated in the last part of this book, i.e., the whole book of The Revival of the Sciences of Religion. It includes the knowledge of what issues from the heart and affects the senses in their acts of worship and usages of life, all of which are treated in the first part of this book.

Third are the auxiliary (*muqaddimat*). These act as the instrument for the Shariyah sciences. Thus linguistic science and syntax are but instruments for the knowledge of the Book of God and the usage (*sunnah*) of His Prophet. In themselves linguistic science and syntax are not Shariyah sciences, but it has become necessary to engage in their study because of the law since this law has come in the language of the Arabs. And whereas every law is revealed through the medium of a particular language, the learning of that language becomes an instrument wherewith to learn the law. Among these instruments, also, is the science of writing. It is however, not a necessary instrument because the Messenger of God was him-

self unlettered (*ummi*). And if it were conceivable that retention of everything that is heard was at all possible, mankind might have dispensed with writing. But, because of the impossibility of such a thing, it has become, on the whole, necessary.

Fourth are the supplementary (*mutammimat*) which, in relation to the science of the Qur'an, are divided into what pertains to pronunciation such as learning the different readings and the enunciation of the different letters, and into what pertains to exposition which also rests on authoritative transmission. This is because language alone cannot treat exposition or its technicalities such as the knowledge of the abrogating (*nasikh*) and the abrogated (*mansukh*), the general (*amm*) and the particular (*khas*), the express laws of the Qur'an as well as its manifest meaning, and finally the manner of their application, i.e. the science which is called the principles of jurisprudence (*usul al-fiqh*), which also includes the sunnah.

In connection with tradition and history, the supplementary sciences are biography, dealing mainly with the lives of illustrious men and of the Companions, knowledge of the trustworthy transmitters of traditions and their peculiarities, in order to distinguish between weak (*daif*) and strong (*qawi*) traditions, and of their ages in order to differentiate between those traditions whose chain of authorities is incomplete or lacking (*mursal*) and those whose chain of authorities goes back to the Prophet (peace and prayers be upon him) (*musnad*), as well as knowledge of whatever is connected with it.

These then are the *Shariyah* sciences. Not only are they all praiseworthy, but they also belong to the category of the fard kifayah. But should one inquire saying: "Why have you appended jurisprudence to secular sciences and grouped jurisprudents among secular scholars?" Let me tell you that God made Adam from earth and his offspring from clay and running water. He brought them out from loins to womb, then to life, and finally to the grave; from the grave He raised them to judgment and from there to Paradise or to Hell Fire. Such was, therefore, their beginning,

such their end, and such their abodes. Furthermore, God created this world in preparation for the Hereafter in order to gather suitable provisions therefrom. If these provisions were gathered justly, dissensions would have ceased and the jurists would have become idle, But since men have with greed gathered their provisions, dissensions ensued and consequently the need for a magistrate to rule them arose. In turn the magistrate felt the need for a canon with which to govern the people. It is the jurist, though, who has the knowledge of the rules of government and the methods of mediation between the people whenever, because of their greed, they contend. He thus becomes the teacher of the magistrates and their guide in government and control, that through their righteousness the affairs of men in this world may be set in order.

Upon my life I declare that jurisprudence is also connected with religion, not directly but indirectly through the affairs of this world, because this world is the preparation for the Hereafter, and there is no religion without it. Furthermore, the state and religion are twins. Religion is the foundation while the state is the guard. That which has no foundation will certainly crumble and that which has no guard is lost. Without the magistrates there is neither government nor control, and the correct way to settle dissensions is through law. And as government by magistrates does not belong primarily to the science of religion but is an adjunct to that without which there is not religion, so is the knowledge of the manner of government. Thus it is well known that it is not possible to carry out the pilgrimage without the protection of an escort of Bedouins along the route. But the pilgrimage itself is one thing, setting out on the road to pilgrimage is another, policing the route without which it is not possible to perform the pilgrimage is still another, and knowledge of the manner of policing the route with all its rules and regulations is again another. The result of jurisprudence is knowledge of the methods of government and control. This is attested by a Tradition whose chain of authorities goes back to the Prophet (peace and prayers be upon him), namely: "People will not be judged except by three: a governor, a deputy and an intruder." The governor is the Imam (the Imams have always been the

judges); the deputy is his lieutenant, while anyone else is an intruder who undertakes that responsibility without there being any need for him to do so. As a matter of fact it was the custom of the Companions to avoid giving legal opinions to the extent that each was in the habit of referring (the question) to his colleague, although they did not avoid answering questions relative to the science of the Qur'an and the Path to the Hereafter. In some recensions (the word) hypocrite (appears) instead of the word intruder, (and rightly so) because anyone who, without any special need, undertakes the responsibility of giving legal opinions does so for the sake of acquiring position and wealth.

If you agree to this, the same will hold true in connection with the rules of invalidating testimonies, restrictive ordinances, indemnities and settling feuds; but it will not hold true in respect to what falls under the Quarter of the Acts of Worship such as fasting and prayer, nor in respect to what the Customs of Life entail of civil and legal matters such as determining the lawful and the unlawful. You should, therefore, know that what the jurispudent comes nearest discussing under works which pertain to the Hereafter are four: Islam, prayer, almsgiving, (doing) what is lawful and abstaining (from) what is unlawful. But when you examine how far the jurispudent's speculation goes into these four you will find that it does not go beyond the limits of this world into the next. If then you realise this limitation in respect to these four it becomes to you more evident in others besides.

Concerning Islam the jurispudent discourses on what renders it sound or unsound as well as on its conditions, but only pays attention to outward confession. The heart, however, is removed from his domain because the Messenger set apart from the jurispudent those who wield the sword and those in whose hand the reins of temporal power lie. This the Messenger did when he said to the man who had killed another because the latter had recited the confession of faith giving for a reason his fear of the sword, "Have you examined his heart?" The jurispudent also determines with the aid of the sword the soundness of (one's) Islam, although

he knows that the sword can neither reveal to him the intentions (of the individual) nor remove from his heart the veil of ignorance and bewilderment. He is, however, a counselor to him who wields the sword. Since the sword can reach the (individual's) neck, and the hand his possessions, repeating the confession of faith with the tongue protects his life and possessions as long as he has either in this world. For this reason the Prophet said: "I was ordered to fight people until they say, 'There is no god but God.' When they say this they render their lives and possessions immune against my hand." He thus confined the efficacy (of verbal confession) to life and possessions; but in the Hereafter mere words do not avail - only the illumination of the hearts (by the divine light), their secret thoughts, and their sincerity do avail. These, however, do not fall within the field of jurisprudence, although the jurist may delve into them as he might also delve into theology and medicine, both of which are outside his field.

Concerning prayer, the jurist is entitled to give his opinion as to whether or not it has been correctly performed in accordance with the prescribed regulations, regardless of the fact that (the worshiper), from the beginning to the end, might not have paid attention to any part of his prayer except the magnificat (takbir), but has instead busied himself in going over his market transactions. Such a prayer is of no use for the Hereafter just as verbal confession of Islam is also of no use. Nevertheless, the jurist does not pass judgment regarding its soundness, namely, whether or not the worshiper has, in what he has performed, fulfilled the requirements of the law and has thereby rendered himself immune to execution and punishment. To (the subject of) submitting and presenting the heart to God, however, both of which are works pertaining to the Hereafter and through which works are rendered efficacious, the jurist does not address himself; and in case he does, he oversteps his bounds.

Concerning almsgiving, the jurist examines what satisfies the demand of the magistrate so that, in the event that the payment of the

alms is withheld and, consequently, the magistrate exacts it by force, the jurisprudent then rules that the responsibility of the magistrate has been fulfilled. It is related that Abou Yusef, the judge, was in the habit of giving away all his income to his wife at the end of each year and in turn making her give away hers to him in order to avoid the payment of alms. On being informed of it, Abou Hanifah declared that this was the result of Abou Yusef's (versatility in) jurisprudence; and Abou Hanifah was right because such a thing is the result of worldly wisdom. Nevertheless, its harm in the Hereafter outweighs every benefit (it may yield in this world). Moreover, such knowledge is harmful.

Concerning the lawful and the unlawful, abstinence from the latter is a part of religion. Piety, moreover, has four grades.

The first is that piety which is required for just testimony and the relinquishing of that which disqualifies man to bear witness before a court, or to be a judge or to act as governor. It consists, in other words, in avoiding all that is clearly unlawful.

The second is the piety of honest men which guards against dubiosities which engender ambiguous and misleading interpretations. Thus the Prophet said: "Discard that which is dubious for that which is indubious." He also said: "Sin is heart alluring."

The third is the piety of the godly which entails desisting from perfectly lawful deeds for fear that may lead to deeds which are unlawful. In this connection the Prophet said: "No man will be numbered among the godly unless he is inclined to avoid what is harmless for fear of what is harmful." Of such is the reluctance to discuss the affairs of people lest one be drawn into backbiting, and the abstinence from eating and drinking of things which whet the appetite lest that should stimulate passion and lust which lead a man to commit that which is forbidden.

The fourth is the piety of the saints which shuns all things but God for fear of expending one single hour of life in things which, although it is clear and certain that they lead to nothing unlawful, do not help to bring the individual nearer to God.

All these grades (of piety), except the first, namely the piety of witnesses and judges as well as what militates against justice, are outside the domain of the jurispudent. Furthermore, to comply with the requirements of this first grade of piety does not preclude sin being punished in the Hereafter. The Prophet said to Wabisah: "Consult your own heart although you have been given a dispensation once, twice or thrice." The jurispudent does not, and should not, express an opinion regarding the things which allure and perplex the heart, or how to deal with them, but confines his opinion to those things which militate against justice. Hence the entire scope of the jurispudent's domain is limited to the affairs of this world which pave the road to the Hereafter. Should he then touch upon the attributes of the heart and the rules of the Hereafter, he does so as an intruder just as he would be whenever anything relative to medicine, arithmetic, astronomy and theology confront him. The same is true of philosophy in relation to syntax or poetry. Sufyan al-Thawri, an authority in esoteric knowledge, used to say that the study of this (science) is not among the provisions for the Hereafter. How could it be when it is agreed that the value of knowledge is acting according to its precepts? Is it possible, therefore, to hold as provisions for the Hereafter the knowledge of the forms that divorce might take, either *zihar* or by *li'an*, of contracts involving immediate payment of the price and admitting delay in the delivery of the article purchased (*salam*), of hire, rental, and lease (*ijarah*), and of moneychanging (*sarf*)? Anyone who acquires the knowledge of these things, hoping to draw nearer to God, would certainly be mad. Indeed, nothing but engaging body and soul in the service of God and His worship would draw people nearer to God; and nobility lies in knowing how to accomplish these deeds.

If you should say: "Why have you regarded medicine and jurisprudence in the same way when medicine pertains to the affairs of this world, namely, the welfare of the body, while upon jurisprudence depends the welfare of religion; and furthermore does not this equal regard of the two violate the public consensus of opinion among all Muslims?" Then know that such a treatment is not necessary and in *fact* the two sci-

ences differ. Jurisprudence is superior to medicine on three counts: first, because it is sacred knowledge, and, unlike medicine, which is not sacred knowledge, jurisprudence is derived from prophecy; *second*, it is superior to medicine because no one of those who are treading the road to the Hereafter can do without it, neither the healthy nor the sick; while on the other hand only the sick, who are a minority, need medicine; *thirdly*, because jurisprudence is akin to the science of the road of the Hereafter, being a study of the works or the senses. The origin of these works as well as their source lies in the attributes of the heart. Thus praiseworthy works are the result of praiseworthy characters (endowed with) saving (grace) in the Hereafter; similarly, the blameworthy works are the result of blameworthy characters. The connection between the senses and the heart is thus clear.

Health and disease, however, result from certain qualities in the humours characteristic of the body, not of the heart. No matter how often jurisprudence is compared with medicine, the superiority of the former is evident. Similarly, whenever the science of the road to the Hereafter is compared with jurisprudence, the superiority of the former is evident.

If you should say: "Explain to me the science of the road to the Hereafter in such a manner as will bring out its outline if the enquiry into its details is not possible," know, then, that it is divided into two parts: the science of revelation and the science of practical religion.

The first Part, namely The science of revelation is the science of esoterics which is the goal of all sciences. One of the gnostics said: "I fear that whoever should lack a portion of that science would come to an evil end." The least portion of the science of revelation is believing in it and placing it in the hands of those worthy of it. Another said: "Whoever has these two characteristics, heresy and pride, will never be blessed with any of this science." It was also said: "Whoever (loves God succeeds, but) whoever loves this world and persists in his desires will not attain the science of revelation, though he might attain the other sciences." The least punishment which the person who denies revelations will suffer is

that he will not be blessed with any of its gifts.

Furthermore, the science of revelation is the science concerned with the saints and the favourites of God. It stands for a light which shines in the heart when it is cleansed and purified of its blameworthy qualities. Through this light is revealed the truth of several things, whose names have hitherto often been heard, and to which ambiguous and obscure meanings have been attached. Through it, these truths are clarified until the true knowledge of the essence of God is attained together with that of His eternal and perfect attributes, His works and wisdom in the creation of this world and the Hereafter as well as the reason for His exalting the latter over the former. Through it also is obtained the knowledge of the meaning of prophecy and prophet and the import of revelation. Through it is obtained the truth about Satan, the meaning of the words angels and devils, and the cause of the enmity between Satan and man. Through it is known how the Angel appeared to the prophets and how they received the divine revelation. Through it is achieved the knowledge of the kingdom of heaven and earth, as well as the knowledge of the heart and how the angelic hosts have confronted the devils. Through it is gained the knowledge of how to distinguish between the company of heaven and the company of the Devil, a knowledge of the Hereafter, Paradise, and Hell Fire, the punishment of the grave, the bridge (al sirat) across the infernal Fire, the Balance of the Judgment Day, and knowledge of the Day of Reckoning. Through it also is comprehended the meaning of the following words of God: "Read your book! Today your soul suffices you as a reckoner." (Surah 17 verse 15) and: "...indeed the Hereafter is the life..." (Surah 29 verse 64). Through this same light is revealed the meanings of meeting God and seeing His gracious face; the meaning of being close to Him and of occupying a place in His proximity; the meaning of attaining happiness through communion with the heavenly hosts and association with the angels and the prophets. Through it also the distinction between the ranks of the people in the different heavens is determined until they see one another in the same way as the Planet Venus is seen in the midst of the heavens. Many other things which would require a great deal of

time to explain because people, once they accept they accept them in principle, take different stands with regard to their significations, are also determined through this light. Thus, some would regard all these as mere examples holding that the eye has not seen, nor the ear heard, neither has it entered into the heart of man that which God has prepared for His righteous servants, and that man knows nothing of Paradise except its attributes and names; others hold that some are mere patterns and some are identical with the realities which their names signify. Likewise others hold that the limit to which our knowledge of God can reach is to admit the inability to know Him. There are some also who claim great things on (the subject) of knowing God while others say that we cannot go beyond what all the common people have reached, namely, that God is, that He is omniscient and omnipotent, that He sees and hears, and that He speaks. We, therefore, mean by the science of revelation (that science whereby the cover is removed so that the truth regarding these things becomes as clear as if it were seen by the eye, leaving thereby no room for any doubt. Man would, by himself, be capable of such a thing had not the rust and rot resulting from the filth of this world accumulated over the surface of the mirror of his heart. By the science of the road of the Hereafter we mean the knowledge of how to remove from the surface of this mirror that filth which bars the knowing of God, His attributes, and His works. The mirror is cleansed and purified by desisting from lust and emulating the prophets in all their states. Thus to whatever extent the heart is cleansed and made to face the truth, to that same extent will reflect His reality. But there is no way to this except through discipline (which will be discussed in its proper place), learning, and instruction.

These sciences are not recorded in books and are not discussed by him whom God has blessed with any of them except among his own circle of intimates who partake with him of them through discourses and secret communication. This last method is nothing but the occult science which the Prophet had in mind when he said: "Indeed of knowledge is a branch that resembles a hidden thing: no one grasps it except those who know God: whenever they declare it no one fails to recognise it except those

who do not know God. Despise not, therefore, a learned man whom God has blessed with this knowledge because God Himself does not despise that man once He has imparted to him that knowledge.”

The second part, namely, the science of practical religion, is the science of the states of the heart, of which the praiseworthy are fortitude, gratitude, fear, hope, resignation, devotion, piety, contentment, generosity, recognition of one’s obligation to God under all circumstances, charity, good faith, morality, fellowship, truthfulness and sincerity. To know the truth concerning these states as well as their definitions and the means whereby they are attained, together with their fruits and signs, and tending whatever state has been weakened until it becomes strong again and whatever has disappeared until it reappears, belongs to the science of the Hereafter. On the other hand, the blameworthy, such as the fear of poverty, discontent with one’s lot, bitterness, such, rancour, envy, deceit, ambition, the desire to be praised, the passion to live long in this life for the sake of indulgence, pride, hypocrisy, anger, scorn, enmity, hatred, greed, niggardliness, lust, extravagance, frivolity, insolence, exalting the rich and despising the poor, haughtiness, vanity, vaunting, boasting, holding oneself above truth, meddling in things not of one’s concern, loquacity, obstinacy, currying favour, adulation, conceit, being diverted from attending to one’s own faults by being occupied with other people’s shortcomings, the vanishing of grief from the heart and the departure of fear of God from it, extreme self pity whenever in affliction, lukewarm support for truth, outwardly professing friendship and secretly fostering enmity, taking advantage of God’s patience and long suffering and persisting in taking away (from people) what God has given them, trusting only in obedience, trickery, dishonesty and fraud, (vain) optimism, cruelty, rudeness, satisfaction in worldly pleasures and dejection at their loss, delight in the company of people and loneliness when they depart, harshness, levity, haste, lack of shame and lack of mercy - these and many similar qualities of the heart are the seed beds of immoralities and the nursery gardens of turpitudes. The opposite of these, namely the praiseworthy traits, are the fountainhead of all good works. To know the defini-

tions of these traits, the truth concerning each, the means whereby they are attained as well as their fruits and cures comprises the sciences of the Hereafter whose acquisition, according to the legal opinion of the learned men of that science is *fard ayn*. Whoever should turn away from this knowledge, would, in the Hereafter, be destroyed by the wrath of the King of Kings, just as he who fails to perform the civil duties would, according to the legal opinion of the jurists of this world, be cut down by the sword of the temporal rulers of this world. The judgment of the jurists concerning obligatory ordinances (*furud ayn*) relates to the welfare of life in this world, while the judgment of the learned men of the science of the Hereafter relates to the welfare of life in the Hereafter. Thus if a jurist were asked concerning the meaning of any of these terms, as for example: sincerity, or dependence, or precaution against hypocrisy, he would hesitate to express an opinion although every one of these is an obligatory ordinance in whose neglect lies his own destruction in the Hereafter. But should you inquire from him concerning the *li'an* form of divorce or the *zihar* form, or concerning *wager* (*sabaq*) and target shooting he would recite to you volumes of minute details which would never be used or needed; and in the event a need might arise for some of them the community would not lack for someone who could render this service and spare the jurist the trouble and labour of his studies. He thus persists labouring day and night on these details trying to memorise and learn them, but the things which are of real importance in religion, he overlooks. Should he, then, be questioned about it, he would say that he had pursued it because it was the science of religion and also a *fard kifayah*, confusing thereby, himself and others by these excuses. The intelligent person knows that if, in performing the *fard kifayah*, the aim of the jurist has been to do the right thing, he should have given precedence to the *fard ayn* and to several others of the *fard kifayah*. How many a town has no physician except from among the followers of protected religions (*dhimmah*) whose testimony, according to the laws of jurisprudence, especially in controversy and polemics. Furthermore, the town is crowded with jurists employed in giving legal opinions

and defending cases. Would that I knew why the learned men of religion permit work in activities which are fard kifayah and which have been performed by quite a number of people to the neglect of other fard kifayah activities which have not yet been performed. Could there be any reason for this except that medicine does not lead to management of religious endowments (*awqaf*), (execution of) wills, possession of the money of orphans, and appointment to judicial and governmental positions through which one exalts himself above his fellow men and fastens his yoke upon his enemies? Indeed the science of religion has been destroyed because the learned men have espoused evil. God is, therefore, our help and refuge. May God protect us refuge. May God protect us from this delusion, displeasing to Him and pleasing to the Devil. The pious among the learned men in esoteric knowledge used to acknowledge the excellence of the learned men in esoteric knowledge (*ilm al-batin*) and the advocates of the inward knowledge of the heart.

The *imam Al Shafi'i* was in the habit of sitting before *Shayban al Ra'i* just as a boy would sit in the school, and would ask concerning one thing or another, to which Shayban would reply: "Would one like you ask the advice of this Bedouin?" Al Shafi'i would say: "This agrees with what we already know." Ahmad ibn Hanbal and Yahya ibn Ma'in used to call upon Ma'ruf al Kharkhi who, in esoteric knowledge (*ilm al-zahir*) was not their equal; nevertheless, they used to seek his advice. And why should they not have done so? Had not the Prophet, when he was asked: "What shall we do when we are confronted by something which we cannot find in either the Qur'an or in the Tradition?" said: "Ask the honest men among you and guide your affairs by consultation." For that reason it has been said that the learned men of esoteric knowledge are the ornament of the earth and the state, while the learned men of esoteric knowledge are the ornament of heaven and its kingdom. *Al Judayd* said: "Once upon a time my teacher al Sari asked me saying: 'When you leave my place whose company do you keep?' I said: '*Al Muhasibi's*.' To which he replied: 'Well have you chosen! Follow his learning and culture, but avoid his affectation in speech and his refutation of the theologians.'

Upon leaving I overheard him say: ‘May God make you first a traditionist and then a Sufi rather than a Sufi first and then a traditionist’.” This is a reference to the fact that he who first acquires versatility in tradition and learning and then turns to Sufism comes off well, he who takes to Sufism before learning exposes himself to danger.

Should you say: “Why did you in your classification of the sciences make no mention of theology and philosophy and not show whether they are blameworthy or praiseworthy?” The know all that theology offers in the way of useful evidence is contained in the Qur’an and Sunnah (traditions). Whatever evidence is not contained therein is either reprehensible argumentation (which, as will be seen, is an innovation), or mere wrangling by dwelling on distinctions or amplification through the array of different opinions, most of which are drivel and nonsense, despised by the mind and rejected by the ears, while others are rumbling into things unrelated to Religion and not customary during the first period of Islam. To enter into such discussions at all was then regarded heresy, but things have now changed. Innovations which turn people from the dictates of the Qur’an and the traditions have arisen and a group has emerged who made imitations of the Book and the Hadith and based upon it false speculation, so that certain dangerous things have necessarily become permissible; they have even become as binding as the fard kifayah. To such an extent would an innovator go whenever he purposes to preach a heresy. We shall discuss this briefly in the following chapter.

As to philosophy, it is not in itself a single branch of science but comprises four:-

The first: This includes geometry and arithmetic, both of which are, as has already been said, permissible and no one is barred from them except the person who might be led by their study to blameworthy sciences, for most of those who practice them have stepped over to innovations. Thus the weak are barred from the study of geometry and arithmetic just as they boy is barred from the bank of the river lest he should fall into the water, and as the newly converted Muslim is kept away from the compa-

ny of unbelievers for fear he might be influenced by them. In this last case not even the strong is called upon to mix with the unbelievers.

The second: This is logic, which is the study of the nature of evidence and its conditions as well as the nature of a definition and its conditions. Both of these are included under theology.

The third: This is divinity, which is the science of the being and attributes of God. This is also included under theology.

Furthermore, the philosophers have not, in their philosophy, developed another type of science, but have branched out into several schools, of which some are systems of unbelief and others of innovation. Thus just as the Mu'tazilite system does not in itself represent a branch of science, but its protagonists, as a group of theologians and specialists in the art of philosophical disputation, have been distinguished by their erroneous views, so are the philosophers.

The fourth: This is physics of which some parts contradict the law and the true Religion, and are therefore folly. These are not science that they may be classified under sciences. Others are a study of the qualities of the different substances, their properties, transmutation and change. This part resembles the researches of physicians, except the physician studies the human body, particularly the cause of its diseases and cure, while the physicists study all substances from the standpoint of change and motion.

Medicine, however, is superior to physics because the former is needed while for the latter there is no need.

The Virtues of the Scholars of Islamic Jurisprudence

The Jurisprudents who are the spokesmen of the science of jurisprudence and the leaders of men, namely, those whose school claims the greatest following, are five:-

Al Shafi'i, Malik, Ahmad ibn Hanbal, Abou Hanifah and Sufyan Al Thawri, (may God have mercy upon them) each one of them was a worshiper of God, an ascetic, a learned man versed in the science of the

Hereafter, a jurisprudent well informed in the affairs of men in this world, and a devotee to the knowledge of God's face.

That *Al Imam Al Shafi'i* (may God have mercy upon him) was a devout worshiper of God is shown by what has been related concerning him, namely that he divided the night into three parts: one part for study, one part for prayer and one part for sleeping. *Al Rabi'a* said: "*Al Shafi'i* used to complete reading the Qur'an in Ramadan 60 times while standing to pray".

With regard to his asceticism, *Al Shafi'i* said, "Whoever should claim that he has in his heart the love of this world as well as the love of his Creator, the same has lied."

Al-Humaydi related that one day *Al Shafi'i* set out for *al-Yaman* in the company of some of the governors. With 10,000 Dirhams he made his way to Makkah where a tent was pitched for him just outside the city and the people came out to see him. He did not leave until he had distributed all among his visitors". Furthermore the strength of *Al Shafi'i's* ascetism, the intensity of his fear of God, and the concentration of his efforts on the Hereafter are manifest from a report that when *Sufyan ibn Ouyena* narrated a Hadith about mystical sciences (*al-raqa'iq*) in his presence he fell unconscious and those present thought that he had died. *Sufyan* thereupon said if he should die, the most excellent man of the age would have passed away.

That *Al Shafi'i* was familiar with the secrets of the hearts and learned in the sciences of the Hereafter would be made known to you through the wise sayings ascribed to him. It has been reported that once he was asked about hypocrisy, he responded intuitively: "Hypocrisy is a golden apple which passion has placed before the eyes of the learned who, through the poor judgment of their impulsive hearts, cast covetous eyes upon it, and thereby their works were frustrated." *Al Shafi'i* (may God have mercy upon him) said: "If you fear the people praising your goods deeds, then seek the pleasure of God and the reward you desire, the punishment you fear and the strength you would be grateful for, and the trial you would

remember, so when you think about any one of these you would see how small your deeds really are”.

That through jurisprudence in particular, and debates centering around the same subject in general, Al Shafī'i had sought nothing but the face of God is revealed by the following, which it has been reported that he said: “I had hoped that men would benefit by this science and that none of the benefits would be attributed to me.” It can be seen how he realised what a curse it was to seek knowledge in order to obtain prestige and how he had been completely above such considerations.

As to *Al Imam Malik* (may God be pleased with him) he was too adorned with those five characteristics. It is reported that he was once asked, “O Malik, what do you say of seeking knowledge?” He replied: “It is fair and beautiful, but find what you need from the time you open your eyes in the morning to the time you close them in the evening and confine yourself to it.” He was so emphatic in exalting the science of religion that whenever he sat down to discourse on tradition, he would first perform his ablutions, sit on his bed, comb his hair, perfume himself, settle down with stateliness and dignity, and then proceed with the discourse. When asked about it, he answered: “I like to exalt the traditions of the Messenger of God.”

With regard to his ascetism, it is attested by the report that *al Mahdi* the prince of the believers, had once asked Malik saying: “Have you any home of your own?” Malik replied: “No! But listen and I shall relate to you. I heard Rabiah ibn abi Abd al Rahman say, ‘Man’s home is his ancestry’.” At another time al Rashid asked him the same question and on his answering, “No.” The Caliph gave him three thousand Dinars and said: “Go buy with this a home.” Malik took the money but did not spend it. When later al Rashid was preparing to return to *Baghdad* he said to Malik: “You should come along with us because we have decided to make the people follow the *Muwatta* (Malik’s tradition) as *Uthman* made the people follow the Qur’an.” Malik replied: “There is no way to make the people follow the *Muwatta* because after the death of the Messenger

of God, his Companions were dispersed around the different countries and in each place they related the traditions, (which they knew) and consequently among the people of each individual country different Hadiths prevail. Furthermore the Prophet said: "Non-conformity among my people is a gift of mercy." It is also not possible to go along with you because the Messenger of God said: 'If they would only understand they would know that Al Madinah is best for them.' And again 'Al Madinah does away with its corruption just as the furnace does away with the dross of the iron.' Therefore here are your Dinars just as you have given them to me; you may take them and if you wish you may leave them. Does this mean that you require me to leave Al Madinah in return for what you have given me? Know that I prefer nothing to the City of the Messenger of God, not even the whole world."

That through his knowledge he sought the face of God and that he despised this world are attested by the following report. He said: "Once upon a time as I entered upon Harun al Rashid, the Caliph told me, '*Abou Abd Allah!* You should frequent our place so that our sons may learn from you the *Muwatta*.' To which I replied: "May God exalt my lord the prince! You my lord are the source of this knowledge. If you honour it, it will be exalted, and if you dishonour it, it will be despised. Furthermore, knowledge is something you achieve, not something you receive.' Thereupon Harun al Rashid said, 'You are right.' and turning to his son added, 'Go out to the mosque and join the audience with the people'."

As to *Abou Hanifah*, he too was a worshiper of God and an ascetic who knew God, had His fear in his heart and sought through his knowledge God's face. That he was a worshiper of God is evidenced by a report transmitted on the authority of Ibn al Mubarak who said that two things were characteristic of Abou Hanifah, manliness and much prayer. Hammad ibn abi Sulayman reported that he was in the habit of spending the whole night in prayer. According to another report it was his custom to spend half the night in prayer until one day, as he was walking through

a street, a certain person pointed to him and said to a companion, 'This is he who spends the whole of the night in prayer.' From that day on, he spent the whole night in prayer and said: "I will be ashamed before God to be described with something I do not possess in connection with my worship of Him."

As to his ascetism, it has been reported that al *Rabi ibn Asim* once said, "I was sent by Yazid ibn *Umar ibn Hubayrah* to summon Abou Hanifah before him. On his appearing, Yazid offered him the position of governor of the treasury, but Abou Hanifah declined the offer and consequently Yazid had him scourged with twenty lashes. It can be seen how he had run away from the office of governor of the treasury and bore the torture instead.

Al Hakam ibn Hisham al Thaqafi said that he had once, while in *Damascus*, related a tradition to the effect that Abou Hanifah was one of the most honest men and that the governor had wanted him to take charge of the keys of the treasury or be scourged if he refused, but *Abou Hanifah* would have nothing of that, preferring torture at the hands of the governor to torture at the hands of God.

It was also reported on the authority of *Mohammad ibn Shuja*, on the authority of one of his companions, that *Abou Hanifah* was once told: "The prince of the believers, Abou Jafar al Mansur, has ordered that the sum of ten thousand Dirhams be paid to you." *Abou Hanifah*, however, would not consent to it and on the day on which the sum was expected to be delivered, he performed the morning prayer, wrapped himself with his cloak and sat in silence. Presently the messenger of *Al Hasan ibn Qatabah* arrived with the money and appeared before Abou Hanifah, but the latter would not speak to him. Then some of those present explained to Al Hasan that it was Abou Hanifah's custom to act like that. Thereupon Al Hasan ordered that the bag containing the money be placed in one of the corners of the house, and left. Abou Hanifah then willed the contents of his house and told his son that, upon his death, his son should take the bag which contained the money to *Al Hasan ibn Qatabah* and tell him to

take back his money which he had deposited with *Abou Hanifah*. When his son delivered the money to Al Hasan, the latter exclaimed: "May the mercy of God be upon your father, indeed he has been zealous over his religion."

It was also related that *Abou Hanifah* had also been invited to fill the position of chief judge but he declined saying: "I am not qualified for this post." Asked why he thought so, he replied, "If I were to be honest (about it I would know and say that) I am not qualified for the job; if on the other hand I were to lie, I might say that I was qualified; but a liar is not fit for the judgeship."

Abou Hanifah's knowledge of the things of the Hereafter and his concern with the weighty matters of religion as well as knowing God are attested to by his deep fear of God and by his ascetism. In this connection Ibn Jurayj had said: "It was reported to me that this Kufian friend of yours, *Al Numan ibn Thabit*, fears God very much." *Sharik al Nakhaj* had said that *Abou Hanifah* spent long spells in silence and contemplation and conversed little with men. These are among the clearest signs of inward knowledge and the concern with the weighty matters of religion, because whoever has been blessed with silence and ascetism would receive all knowledge as well.

The virtues of *Abou Hanifah* are, however, too many to be numbered. Had he not been characterised by perseverance in self mortification, and had he not dipped into the sea of contemplation? Had he not throughout a period of forty years performed his morning prayer (having spent all night in continual prayer) on the basis of the evening ablutions? Had he not, also, performed the pilgrimage fifty five times?

This is but a small part of the lives of these three Imams. As to *Ahmad ibn Hanbal* and *Sufyan al Thawri*, their followers are not as many as those of the three other Imams, and of the two, the followers of *Sufyan* are the less numerous. Nevertheless, of the five, *Ahmad* and *Sufyan* were the best known for piety and ascetism. Since this book is, however, full of the account of their work and words, there is no need to take up their

lives in detail at this moment. For the present, examine the lives of these three Imams and ask yourself whether these states, words, and works, through which they forsook the world and devoted themselves to God, were merely the result of the knowledge of the several branches of jurisprudence, such as contracts of the type of salam, hire, rental and lease; and the different forms of divorce, namely, *zihar*, *ila* and *li'an*; or the result of a higher and nobler knowledge. Scrutinise, too, those who claim to be following the example of these Imams and find out for yourself whether their claim is true or false.

Chapter Three

On what is popularly considered to be a part of the science of religion, but is (really) not

Including a discussion of the circumstances under which some of the sciences would be blameworthy; and on the exposition of how the names of certain sciences, jurisprudence, the science of religion, theology, admonition, and philosophy, have been changed, as well as on showing how much of sacred knowledge is praiseworthy and how much is blameworthy.

Be advised then that knowledge is not held to be blameworthy in itself. It is only regarded as such in the eyes of men for one of three reasons.

First when it leads to any harm, whether the harm should befall its practitioner or someone else besides, for which reason the science of magic and talismans is held blameworthy.

Second, a knowledge is blameworthy when it is mostly (fi ghalib al-amr) harmful as, for example, astronomy which is not, in itself, blameworthy, because it is of two parts: The first is mathematical (in reference to which) the Qur'an has pronounced that (by it) the courses of the sun and the moon are reckoned. Thus God said: "And the sun and the moon (run their courses) according to a (certain) reckoning." (Surah 55 verse 4) And again: "And as for the moon, We decreed stations for it, till it changes like an old and crooked palm branch." (Surah 36 verse 39) The second is astrology (ahkam) the gist of which is that (future) events are indicated by present causes. This is similar to how a physician is guided by the patient's pulse to predict the future development of a disease. Astrology is therefore an attempt to know the course of the laws and ordinances of God relative to His creatures. But the law has declared it blameworthy. Thus the Prophet said: "Whenever the decrees of God are mentioned, withhold from discussing them; whenever the stars are men-

tioned, desist from talk; and when my Companions are mentioned, refrain from any gossip.”

He warned against it for three reasons; **first** because it is harmful to most people, since if they were told that these results would ensure consequent upon the course of the stars, they might think that it is the stars which influence the course of events and are also the gods who direct the world. Furthermore, in view of the fact that the stars are glorious celestial bodies and awe inspiring to the hearts, the hearts of mankind would naturally become focused upon them and would see both good and evil required or forbidden by the stars with the result that the Name of God would be erased from the heart. The feeble minded one does not look beyond the means, and only the learned man who is well grounded in knowledge would understand that the sun, moon, and the stars are subject to the will of God.

A **second** reason is that astrology is purely guess work and in the opinion of the average man, (the influence of the stars) is not determined either with certainty or even probability. Pronouncements in connection with it are the result of ignorance. Consequently, astrology has been pronounced blameworthy because of this ignorance, not because it is knowledge.

A **third** reason (for which a kind of knowledge may be pronounced blameworthy) is when the pursuit of that kind of knowledge does not give the practicer any real scientific advantage. Consequently, such knowledge is intrinsically blameworthy, as, for example, the study of the trivial science before the important ones, and the obscure before the significant, like delving into the divine mysteries which have been pursued by both the philosophers and the theologians; but neither they nor anyone else could (grasp) it in whole or in part except the prophets and the saints. For this reason people should be deterred from delving into these mysteries, and instead, be diverted to pursue those subjects which the law allows, wherein lies sufficiency for the guided.

Determining What Names of Sciences Have Been Changed

We should also be aware that the source of the confusion of the blameworthy sciences with the sacred is the tampering with, and the changes in, the names of the praiseworthy sciences and the alterations introduced therein, in bad faith, so as to connote other than those which the righteous fathers and the first century Muslims intended. Consequently, five terms, namely, jurisprudence (*fiqh*), the science of religion (*al ilm*), theology (*tawhid*), admonition (*tadhkir*), and philosophy (*hikmah*), all names of praiseworthy sciences, whose possessors have held the chief positions in the religious organisation, but which now have been altered so that they connote something blameworthy; yet people have become reluctant to condemn those who possess them because of the widespread practice of applying these names to all of them (alike).

The first term to be affected was jurisprudence whose meanings has been tampered with not so much by alteration and change but by limitation. It has thus been limited to the knowledge of unusual legal cases, the mastery of the minute details of their origins, excessive disputation on them, and the retention of the different opinions which relate to them. The person who goes more deeply into these things than his colleagues and devotes more time to them than the rest is considered the most versatile in jurisprudence. But in the early period of Islam the term jurisprudence (*fiqh*) was applied to the science of the path of the Hereafter and the knowledge of the subtle defects of the soul, the influences which render works corrupt, the thorough realisation of the inferiority of this life, the urgent expectation of bliss in the Hereafter, and the domination of fear over the heart. This is indicated by the words of God when He said:

“.... to become learned in Religion, and to warn their people when they return back to them,...” (Surah 9 verse 122)

Jurisprudence is, therefore, that which brings about such a warning and such fear rather than details of ordinary divorce or divorcee through li'an, or manumission (*ataq*), salam contracts, and hire, rental, and lease (*ijarah*), which produce neither warning nor fear. On the contrary, to de-

vote oneself exclusively to these things hardens the heart and removes from it all fear which is exactly what we see now in those who have so devoted themselves. God thus said:

“...they have hearts but they do not understand with them....”(Surah 7 Verse 179)

having had in mind the meaning of belief, not of legal opinions.

The Prophet said: “Shall I tell you who is the profoundly discerning man?” They answered: “Yes.” Thereupon he said: “The profoundly discerning man is he who has not induced people to despair of the mercy of God; nor made them feel safe (rather than urge them to repent) during the period of respite which God, out of patience, gives to mankind, nor made them lose hope in the spirit of God; nor discarded the Qur’an in favour of something else.”

The second term to have been altered is the science of religion (*al-ilm*) which used to be applied to the knowledge of God, His miracles, and His works among His servants and creatures. When, therefore, the *Caliph Umar* died, Ibn Musud exclaimed: “Indeed nine tenths of the science of religion (*al-ilm*) has passed away.” He thus designated this knowledge as the science, using the definite articles, and then explained it as the knowledge of God. Yet people used the term freely and altered its meaning by restriction until it became more commonly applied to those who debate cases of jurisprudence and the like with adversaries and are dubbed learned in the truth, versatile in knowledge.

The third term (to suffer alteration) was theology (*tawhid*) which has now become equivalent to scholastic theology (*sina’at al-kalam*), the knowledge of the methods of argumentation, the manner of confounding adversaries, and the ability to be diffuse in speech by means of asking too many questions, raising doubts, and formulating requisites, to an extent that some of those groups have gone so far as to call themselves ‘The People of Equity and Unity’ (ahl al-adl w-al-tawhid) while the scholastic theologians were called the learned men of religion although nothing of

the tenets of men of religion although nothing of the tenets of their profession was known during the early period of Islam. On the contrary (the learned men at the time) condemned very strongly anyone who would take to disputation and contention.

As to the evident proofs which the mind accepts immediately on hearing and which are contained in the Qur'an, they have been known to all. Knowledge of the Qur'an was all knowledge while theology (*tawhid*) signified something else which was beyond the comprehension of most scholastic theologians, and which, when they comprehended it, they were not called after its name. Theology was then the belief that all things come from God, a belief which ruled out all intermediary causes (*al-asbab w-al-wasa'it*). Both good and evil would then be seen as coming from God.

Theology (*tawhid*) is, therefore, like a precious fruit which is encased in two successive husks. (Obviously) the outer husk is farther from the pith than the inner husk. People have thus applied the term (theology) exclusively to the husks which encase the pith, as well as to their protection, and have entirely ignored the pith itself. The outer husk represents the verbal profession that there is no god but Allah, which profession is called monotheism in contradistinction to the trinitarianism the Christians profess. Such a profession, however, may come from the lips of a hypocrite whose secret thoughts contradict his open declaration. The inner husk represents the state wherein the heart neither opposes nor denies the express meaning of this statement, but rather the outward expression of the heart represents its belief and acceptance of that belief. This the monotheism which the common folk profess.

The third part is the pith itself. It represents the belief that all things come from God, a belief which rules out any consideration of instrumentalities and implies worshiping Him and no other thing besides Him.

The fourth term to be altered was the science of invocation (*dihkr*) and admonition (*tadhkir*). God said:

“And remind them, surely remembrance benefits the believers.”
(Surah 51 verse 55)

Several traditions commending the assemblies of invocation (*dihkr*) have been passed down to us, as, for instance, the words of the Prophet when he said: “When you pass by the gardens of Paradise, stop and enjoy yourselves.” On being asked what the gardens of Paradise were, he replied, “The assemblies of invocation.” And again in the following tradition: “Indeed, other than the guardian angels, God has rover angels (*sayyahan*) who roam the earth looking for the assemblies of invocation (*dihkr*). On locating an assembly they beckon one another saying: ‘Come to your goal.’ Then the rover angels gather around these assemblies and hear the words: ‘O you remember God and give warning to one another.’ The practice has been altered in favour of story telling, recital of poems, ecstatic utterances (*shath*) and heresies (*tammat*), the things which contemporary preachers persist in doing.

As to story telling, it is an innovation; in fact our fathers have warned against attending the circles of story tellers saying that it was not the custom either at the time of the Messenger of God or the times of Abou Bakr and Umar. It was not until the appearance of heresy that they made their appearance.

Unfortunately, however, those who are in the habit of embellishing their speech with lies have taken these traditions as means of justification for themselves and have appropriated the name warning (*tadhkir*) for their fables thus forgetting the right path of praiseworthy invocation (*dihkr*) and spending their time in recounting tales which are subject to variations, accretions, and deletions, and which deviate from the stories which occur in the Qur’an and go beyond them. Some of the tales are good to hear while others are harmful in spite of the fact that they may be true. Whoever would go after this practice would no longer be able to distinguish truth from lies and what is good from that which is harmful.

As to poetry, its generous use in sermons is blameworthy. God said:

“And the poets, only the erring people follow them; Do you not see how they wander in every way?” (Surah 27 verse 224 & 225).

And God High Exalted said:

“And We have not taught him poetry, it is not befitting for him.”
(Surah 36 verse 69)

Furthermore, most of the poetry with which the preachers are familiar and which they are accustomed to repeat in their sermons pertain to claims of being in love, the beauty of the beloved, the joys of union with him, and the pains of separation; while the assembly comprises no one but the crude among the common folk whose minds are saturated with lust and their eyes never cease from staring at fair faces. Their poetry inspires nothing in their hearts except that which their hearts already conceal, and enkindles therein the flames of lust. Consequently they begin to shriek and make a show of their love. Most of this, if not all, is a result of a certain kind of corruption. Therefore no poetry should be used unless it contains a moral or a wise saying and should only be used as evidence or for example.

By ecstatic utterances we mean two types of speech evolved by some of the Sufis. The first comprises long pretentious claims of excessive love (*ishq*) of God and of union (*wisal*) which renders outward deeds superfluous until some have asserted oneness (*ittihad*) with God, the removal of the veil (*hijab*), seeing (*mushahadah*) Him with the eye (*ru'yah*), and mouth to mouth conversation. They thus say that they were told such and such and that they have said such and such and imitate thereby al Husayn ibn Mansur al Hallaj who was crucified for letting slip from his lips certain words of this type, and cite as an example his saying: “I am the Truth.” (*Ana'l Haqq*).

The second type of ecstatic utterances comprises unintelligible words with pleasing externals of which some, though awesome, are useless. They may be of two kinds: the first and more common comprises words unintelligible to the author who utters them because of the perplexity in

his own mind and the confusion in his imagination resulting from his ignorance of the exact meaning of the words which he hears: while the seconds represents words which may be intelligible to their author who, however, because of his insufficient practice in science and his lack of instruction in rhetoric, is unable to convey them to others through language which can express his thoughts.

As to heresies (*tammāt*), they comprise, besides what we have already mentioned under the ecstatic utterances (*shāth*), another thing characteristic of them, namely, the dismissal of the obvious and literal meaning of words in favour of an esoteric interpretation of worthless value such as the Batinite method of interpretation which is unlawful and of great harm.

An example of the interpretations put forward by those heretics may be seen in the assertion of one of them that in the verse where God addresses Moses saying: "Go to Pharaoh, truly he is a tyrant-" (Surah 79 verse 17) the word Pharaoh stands for the heart of Moses, the heart being the trespasser against every man. Again when God said to Moses: "Cast down your staff." (Surah 27 verse 10), the word staff is asserted to represent anything besides God on which man may depend (and in which he may place his trust), and should therefore be cast away.

The fifth term to have been altered is wisdom (*hikmah*), since we see that it has now become customary to apply the word wise (*hakim*) equally to the physician, the poet, the astrologer, and even to the one who reads fortunes for the peasants who squat on the street corners. Wisdom, however, is that which God commended when he said:

"He bestows wisdom upon whoever He pleases and whoever has wisdom bestowed upon him indeed has been endowed with a bounty overflowing..." (Surah 2 verse 269)

The Prophet also said: "A word of wisdom which man learns is better to him than the world and all that is in it." We see, therefore, what wisdom stood for and to what it has been altered, and examine, in the same

way, the other terms. Beware, then, of being deceived by the ambiguities of the teachers of falsehood: their evil influence upon religion is greater than that of Satan.

Determining How Much is Praiseworthy (to acquire) of the Praiseworthy Sciences

One should know that, in this respect, science is divided into three parts. One part is that whose knowledge is blameworthy whether it be in part or as a whole. Another is that whose partial as well as total knowledge is praiseworthy; in fact the more one acquires of it, the better. Third is that whose knowledge is praiseworthy within a certain limit, that of sufficiency, but beyond that it ceases to be praiseworthy; to go into it deeply is not desirable.

The part whose partial and total knowledge is blameworthy is that which has no use either in the realm of religion or in the domain of life because its harmfulness exceeds its utility, such as the science of magic, talismans and astrology.

The part whose knowledge, even to the limit of thoroughness, is praiseworthy is the science of knowing God, His attributes and works as well as His Law which governs His creatures and His Wisdom in ordaining the superiority of the Hereafter to this life. The knowledge of this is incumbent upon mankind both for itself and also for attaining thereby the bliss of the Hereafter.

The sciences whose knowledge is praiseworthy up to a certain limit are those which we have already mentioned under the sciences the acquisition of whose knowledge is a fard kifayah. Every one of these sciences has three stages; first limitation (iqtisar) which stage is the primary, second moderation (iqtisad) which is the intermediary, and third thoroughness (istiqsi) which is a sequel to moderation and which goes on and on during the life of the seeker. Be, therefore, one of two, either one who educates himself, or one who concerns himself with the education of others after he has educated himself. Never, however, concern yourself with re-

forming others before you have first reformed yourself.

The one who would spend himself in pursuing what would reform others (while he himself remains unredeemed) is insolent, and how utterly foolish is the man who, when snakes and scorpions have crept beneath his clothes, is busy looking for a whisk with which to drive the flies off from other people, a task which will neither spare nor save him from the attacks of the snakes and scorpions lurking beneath his clothes.

Chapter Four

On the Reasons Which Induced Men to pursue the Science of Po-lemics and on Revealing the Evils of Debate and Disputation as well as Stating the Conditions Which Render Them Permissible.

After the death of the Messenger of God, the caliphate was occupied by the orthodox and guided caliphs who were Imams of righteousness, learned in the science of God, His essence and His attributes, versed in His statutes, and independent in handing down their legal opinions and decisions. In this they did not seek the aid of jurists except in very rare cases in which consultation was indispensable. They devoted themselves to the science of the Hereafter and used to refer legal questions and all that pertains to human affairs in this world to one another and with their keenest effort, as the accounts of their lives reveal, they followed after God.

When at their death, the caliphate passed to those who occupied it without either merit or independence in legal opinion and decisions, the caliphs were compelled to seek the aid of jurists and to attach them to themselves on all occasions in order to consult with them on the manner of their judicial decisions. A few learned followers (*tabi'un*), who continued to emulate the orthodox caliphs and persisted in conforming to the dictates of religion, and in following the way of righteous Fathers, were still living. Whenever they were sought (for appointment as judges), they would flee, disdaining (altogether such honour). Consequently the caliphs were compelled to be insistent in their desire to appoint them as judges and to delegate to them the power of government. Contemporaries were thus awakened to the glory of the learned men who, while they paid no attention to the caliphs and governors, were persistently sought by them. As a result these contemporaries turned with their efforts towards knowledge which they hoped to acquire in order to attain power and glory through the solicitation of governors. They bent themselves to the study of the science of legal opinions and offered their

services to governors from whom they sought office and rewards. In this some failed while others met success, but those who were successful were not free from the obsequiousness of begging and the servility of indebtedness. Consequently the learned men, after having once been sought, have now become job seekers, and after having once been proud of their indifference to the sultans, have now become obsequious by waiting upon them. (This is true of all) except the few learned men of religion whom God has blessed in every age.

Subsequently, however, there appeared some distinguished men who deemed it improper to discourse on theology and start a series of debates therein because such a thing would lead to bloodshed and destruction. Instead they preferred to debate in jurisprudence and to point out the more important juridical points in the systems of Al Shafi'i and Abou Hanifah in particular

Consequently, men discarded theology and other disciplines of knowledge and pursued especially problems of disagreement between Al Shafi'i and Abou Hanifah, while to those between *Malik*, *Sufyan (al Thawri)*, *Ahmad (ibn Hanbal)*, and others, they paid little attention. Their purpose, they claimed, was to elicit the abstruse points of law, determine the principles of the system, and prepare the bases of legal opinions and decisions. They composed many works on the subject and elicited many points, setting forth therein the different kinds of syllogisms of controversy and enumerating the various works that pertain thereto. Furthermore they still continue to compose at this present time; as to the future, however, we do not know what God ordained. This, then, is what induced men to take up nothing but controversies and debate.

On the Evils of Debate and the Character Destroying Influences Resulting Therefrom

We shall now allude to the major evils which are enkindled by debate. Of these we may enumerate the following.

One is envy. The Prophet said: "As fire consumes wood so does envy

consume goods deeds.” The debater persists in envy because at times he overcomes his adversary and at other times he himself is overcome; at times his words are praised and at other times those of his opponent are applauded; and as long as there remains in all the world one known among men for his versatile knowledge and regarded by them more learned than the debater and endowed with keener insight, the debater will inevitably envy him and wish that the favours and admiration which that man enjoys might accrue to him instead.

Envy is a consuming fire; its victim is subject to torment in this world while in the world to come his tortures will be more intense and painful. For this reason Ibn Abbas said: “Take knowledge wherever you may find it, but accept not the opinion of one jurisprudent concerning another because they are as jealous of one another as the bulls in the cattle-yard.”

Another is pride and haughtiness. The Prophet said: “He who exalts himself is humbled by God.”

The debater persists in exalting himself above his equals and peers and in claiming for himself a station higher than his worth to the extent that he and his colleagues fight over their seats in assembly halls and boast about the degree of their elevation or lowliness as well as their proximity to, or remoteness from the central seats.

Another is rancour from which a debater is hardly ever free. The Prophet said: “The believer is free from rancour.” Several more traditions have been related in condemnation of rancour and they are well known. Yet we do not know of a debater who is capable of entertaining no rancour against anyone who would nod his head in approval of the words of his adversary, or who, when the latter pauses in the midst of a sentence, would politely wait for him. On the contrary he would, whenever he is confronted with such a situation, entertain and foster rancour in his heart. He may attempt to restrain himself hoping thereby to disguise his feelings; but in most cases he fails as his feelings invariably reveal themselves. How can he refrain from rancour when it is inconceivable that all the audience should unite in favouring his argument and approve all his

conclusions and deductions? Furthermore, should his opponent show the least sign of inconsideration about what he is saying, he would entertain for him in his heart a hatred that would last throughout his life.

Another is backbiting which was likened by God to the eating of carrion. "...nor backbite each other, would any of you like to eat the flesh of his dead brother?..." (Surah 49 verse 12) The debater persists in "eating carrion" and is continually referring to the words of his opponent and traducing him. Because he endeavors to be right in what he says about his opponent, he inevitably cites only what shows the weaknesses of his opponent's argument and the flaws in his excellence. Of such is traducing and backbiting, while lying is sheer calumny.

The debater, moreover, cannot keep his tongue from attacking the honour of anyone who turns away from him and listens to his opponent. He would even ascribe to him ignorance, foolishness, lack of understanding and stupidity.

Another is self-justification. God said:

"...therefore do not claim piety for yourselves, He knows best who is pious." (Surah 53 verse 32)

A certain wise man once was asked: "What truth is reprehensible?" He replied: "A man's praising himself (even though it is justified)." A debater is never free from praising himself (and boasting) of his power, triumph, and excellence over his peers. In the course of a debate he would repeatedly say: "I am fully aware of all such things," and "I am versatile in sciences, of independent judgment in questions of law, and well versed in the knowledge of tradition," and many other assertions besides with which he would sing his own praise, sometimes out of sheer arrogance and at other times out of need to render his words convincing. It is well known that arrogance and self pride are by law and reason condemned.

Another is spying and prying into a person's private affairs. God said: "...And do not spy..." (Surah 49 verse 12).

The debater always seeks to uncover the errors of his peers and continually pries into the private affairs of his opponents. He would, when informed of the arrival in town of another debater, seek someone who could reveal the inside story of the man and would by means of a questionnaire attempt to bare his vices in order to expose and disgrace him whenever the need should arise. He even would inquire about the affairs of his early life and the blemishes of his body in the hope of discovering some defect or disfigurement such as scalp pustule and the like. Should he fear defeat at the hands of his opponent, he would, in the course of the debate, allude to these blemishes, especially if his opponent should remain firm and stand his ground, and would not refrain from being outspoken if he were given to insolence and scorn.

Another is to rejoice at the injury of others and feel depressed when they are glad. Anyone who does not desire for his brother Muslim what he desires for himself is far removed from the way of the believers. Thus he who prides himself by parading his excellence is inevitably pleased at the injury of his peers and equals who vie with him for glory. The hatred which exists between them is like that which exists between fellow-wives. Just as the one wife would tremble and turn pale at the sight of her fellow wife so would a debater at the sight of another; his colour would change and his mind become perplexed as though he had seen a mighty devil or a hungry lion.

Another is deception, the evidence of whose blameworthiness (is well known) and need not be enumerated. Debaters are compelled to deception because when they meet their opponents, friends, or followers, they find it necessary to endear themselves to them by saying nice things which they do not mean, by feigning to have been anxious to meet them, and by pretending to be impressed by their station and position, while everyone present as well as the speakers and those to whom they have spoken know that the whole thing is untrue, false, fraudulent, and wicked. They profess their love with their tongues while their hearts seethe with hate. From it all we seek refuge in God.

The Prophet also said: “When people take to knowledge and ignore works, when they profess love to one another with their tongue and nurse hatred in their hearts, and when they sever the ties of relationship which bind them, God will visit His wrath upon them and curse them, He will render their tongues mute and their eyes blind.” The truth of this tradition, which was related by Al Hasan, has been verified as these conditions which it predicts have been witnessed and seen.

Another is to resist truth and detest it and to persist in disputing it so much so that the most hateful thing to a debater is to see the truth revealed by his opponent; no matter what it may be, he would do his best to refute and deny it and would exert his utmost in deception, trickery and fraud in order to disprove his adversary until contention becomes in him a second nature. He is unable to hear anything without immediately expressing his objection to it. This habit of his would even drive him to dispute the truths of the Qur'an and the words of tradition and would cause him to cite the one in contradiction of the other.

Another is hypocrisy and flattering people in an effort to win their favour and mislead. Hypocrisy is that virulent disease which leads to the gravest of the major sins. The debater wants nothing but to the gravest of the major sins. The debater wants nothing but to put himself forward before people, and to gain their approval and praise.

These ten traits are among the greatest secret sins. Others who lack restraint, may engage in controversies leading to the exchange of blows, kicking, boxing, tearing garments, plucking beards, cursing parents, denouncing teachers, and outright slander. Such people, however, are not considered respectable human beings. The prominent and sober among them do not go beyond the preceding ten traits. One may be free of this or that trait with regard to his inferiors or superiors whatever the case may be, or with regard to people outside his community or his sphere of work. Yet in his attitude towards his peers, who are equal to him in position, the debater is guilty of all these traits. Each of these ten traits may give rise to ten other vices which we shall neither discuss nor explain at

the present time. They include snobbishness, anger, hatred, greed, the desire to seek money and power in order to attain triumph, boasting, gaiety, arrogance, exalting the wealthy and those in authority as well as frequenting their places and partaking of their unlawful riches, parading with horses, state coaches, and outlawed garments, showing contempt to people by being vain and ostentatious, meddling in the affairs of others, talkativeness, the disappearance of awe, fear and mercy from the heart, absentmindedness to an extent that the worshiper would no longer be aware of what he had prayed, or read, or who had communed with him during the prayer.

Chapter Five

On the Proprieties of the Student and the Teacher

The formal proprieties and duties of the student are many but may be classified under ten headings.

The first duty of the student is to purify his soul from impure traits and blameworthy characteristics because knowledge is the worship of man's heart as well as the prayer of his inmost self (sirr) and the oblation of his inward being before God. Just as prayer, which is the duty of the physical senses, is not fulfilled unless the physical body has been purified from excrements and impurities, so is the worship of the inward being as well as the reformation of the heart: they are not fulfilled through knowledge unless they first be cleansed from impurities and uncleanness.

The second duty of the student is to reduce (to a minimum) his ties with the affairs of the world and leave his kin and country because such ties occupy one's time and divert one's attention. Furthermore God has not given the human two hearts and the more the mind divides its attention among several things, the less able it is to comprehend the truth. For this reason it has been said: "knowledge will surrender nothing to mankind unless mankind surrenders his all to it." Even when you devote yourself completely to it, you cannot be sure that you will attain any of it. The mind which divides its attention among different things is like a stream the water of which flows in several different directions only to be absorbed in part by the earth and in part by the air with the result that nothing is left for irrigation of planted lands.

The third duty of the student is that he should neither scorn knowledge nor exalt himself over the teacher, but rather entrust to him the conduct of his affairs and submit to his advice just as the simple patient would submit to a sympathetic and clever physician. He should humble himself before his teacher and through his service seek reward and honour.

The fourth duty is that the student should at first pay no attention to the numerous differences of opinion which exist among people, whether in the secular sciences or in the sciences of the Hereafter, because they would confuse and perplex his mind, cool his enthusiasm and cause him to despair of ever comprehending or learning anything. Rather he should first master the one and only praiseworthy way which is satisfactory to his teacher and then attend to the other schools of thought and questionable ideas. He should be on the lookout to see if his teacher is not capable of reaching independent opinions but is in the habit of repeating the opinions of the different schools and the comments which have been made concerning them, because the influence of such a teacher is more misleading than it is helpful. One blind is not fit to lead the blind and guide them.

The fifth duty is that the seeker after knowledge should not allow any branch or kind of praiseworthy knowledge to escape him without carefully examining it in order to become familiar with its aims and purposes, and should time permit, he should take it up in detail; otherwise he should address himself to and master the most important, while acquainting himself with the rest, because the different branches of knowledge are both supplementary to one another and closely interrelated.

The sixth duty is that the student should not address himself at the same time to every branch of knowledge, but should rather observe some kind of order and begin with the most important, especially since life is ordinarily too short to enable a person to pursue all branches of knowledge. It is therefore wise to acquire the best of everything, satisfying oneself, so to speak, with the mere tasting of it while directing whatever power one has left, after having obtained all available knowledge, towards mastering that noblest of all sciences, the science of the Hereafter.

The seventh duty is that no one should address himself to one branch of knowledge before he has already mastered the branch which precedes it because science is of necessity so arranged that one branch prepares for another and one branch leads to another. Only the person who would observe this order would succeed.

The eighth duty is to know how to ascertain the noble nature of this or the other science. By this is meant two things; the nobility of its fruit and the authenticity of its principles. Take for example the science of religion and that of medicine. The fruit of the one is eternal life and the fruit of the other is the physical life; consequently the science of religion is the nobler; or again the science of arithmetic and astrology; the former is the nobler because of the firmer and more authentic foundations of its principles. If on the other hand arithmetic should be compared with medicine the latter would be the nobler with respect to its fruit while with respect to its principles arithmetic would be the nobler. The fruit, however, has the priority. For this reason medicine, although mostly guesswork, is nobler.

The ninth duty is that the student's purpose should, at the time, be the adornment and beautification of his inner self with virtue, and at the end, nearness to God and ascent to the neighbourhood of the heavenly hosts, the angels and the cherubim. His aim should not be the attainment of authority or influence nor contention with foolish men and boasting before his peers. But if his aim was (to draw near to God) he would inevitably seek that which was closest to it, namely, the science of the Hereafter. Nevertheless he should not look with contempt upon the other sciences such as the sciences of jurisprudence, the sciences of syntax and grammar which are connected with the Qur'an and the Sunnah, and other sciences like those already mentioned in connection with the auxiliary and supplementary sciences discussed under those sciences the acquisition of which is a fard kifayah (collective duty).

One should not, however, gather from our enthusiastic praise of the science of the Hereafter that we seek to disparage the other sciences. On the contrary those who have undertaken to study them are like those who have undertaken to guard the outpost of Islam where they are encamped, or like the conquerors who are warring in the cause of God. Of them some are active fighters, others are on the reserve, others are in charge of the water supply, while others look after the mounts; but all will receive

their reward if their aim is the glory of the word of God rather than the possession of spoils. God said:

“...God will raise up in rank those of you who believe and who have been granted knowledge...”(Surah 58 verse 11)

And again referring to those who have followed His good pleasure:

“They are in ranks before God...” (Surah 3 verse 163)

Virtue is relative and our scorn for the moneychangers when we compare them with royalty does not mean that they are contemptible when compared with the street cleaners. Do not think, therefore, that whatever falls short of the highest rank is worthless. For the highest rank belongs to the prophets, followed by that of the saints, then that of the learned men who are well versed in knowledge, and finally the righteous according to their ranks. In short:

“And whoever has done an atom's weight of good shall see it; * And whoever has done an atom's weight of evil shall see it.” (Surah 99 verses 7-8)

Whosoever will seek God through knowledge, no matter what kind, he is sure to profit and advance.

The tenth duty of the student is that he should know the relation of the different sciences to the goal so that he might not attach more importance to close by, inconsequential matters than to remote but more important things.

The Duties of the Teacher

The first duty of the teacher is to be sympathetic to students and treat them as his own children. The Prophet said: “I am to you like a father who desires to save his child from the fires of hell, which is more important than any of the efforts of parents to save their children from the fires of the earth.” For this reason the rights of the teacher have become greater than the rights of the parents. The parents are the cause of the children’s present existence in this mortal life, while the teacher is the cause of their immortal life.

The second duty of the teacher is to follow the example of the Law giver; he should seek no remuneration for his services on behalf of knowledge and accept neither reward nor thanks. Rather he should impart his knowledge free for the glory of God and for the sake of drawing near to Him. He should not feel that his students are under any obligation to him although the feeling of obligation is incumbent upon them. He should give them credit for disciplining their hearts with knowledge in order to draw near to God. Thus, when someone lends you a plot of land so that you can exploit it for yourself by planting it, the benefits you reap are greater than those of the owner of the land. Would you then feel that he was under any obligation to you? Similarly, in teaching, your compensation is greater than that of the student, and without him you would not have attained it.

The third duty of the teacher is that he should not withhold from the student any advice, or allow him to attempt the work of any grade unless he is qualified for it, or permit him to address himself to abstruse sciences before he has mastered those which are clear. He should also point out to him that the purpose of acquiring knowledge is to draw near to God rather than power, boasting, and competition, and should in the strongest possible way, condemn any such things in his students.

The fourth duty which is one of the finer points of the profession of

teaching is that the teacher, in dissuading the student from his evil ways, should do so by suggestion rather than openly, and with sympathy rather than with odious upbraiding. Open dissuasion destroys the veil of awe, invites defiance, and encourages stubbornness. The Prophet, who is the guide of every teacher, said in this connection: "If men had been forbidden to make porridge of camels' dung, they would have done it, saying that they would not have been forbidden to do it unless there had been some good in it."

The fifth duty is that the person who is teaching a certain science should not belittle or disparage the value of other sciences before his students. Thus it is customary for the teacher of language to disparage jurisprudence and the teacher of jurisprudence to slight the sciences of traditions and interpretation. Such traits are blameworthy and reprehensible in teachers, and should be avoided.

The sixth duty of the teacher is that he should limit the student to what the latter is able to understand and should not require of him anything which his mind cannot grasp for fear that he would develop a feeling of dislike for the subject, and his mind would become confused. In this the teacher should follow the example of the Prophet who said: "We prophets have been commanded to give every man his rightful place and to communicate with everyone according to his own ability to understand."

The seventh duty is that the teacher should give his backward students only such things as are clear and suitable to their (limited understanding) and should not mention to them anything about the details that are apt to follow but which he deems fitting for the present to withhold. Such a course would discourage the students and make their interest even in easy subjects lukewarm, perplex them in their minds and make them think that the real reason for the teacher's reluctance to impart to the those details is his illiberality, especially because everyone usually believes himself capable of mastering every science no matter how complex. Thus there is no one who is not satisfied with God for the perfect

mind He gave him. Even the most foolish and feeble minded among men is usually the most pleased with the perfection of his mind.

The eighth duty is that the teacher must practice what he teaches and not allow his works to contradict his word. The relation of the guide to those who seek his guidance is like the relation of the stamp to the clay and like that of the shadow of the cane to the cane itself. How then could the clay be stamped with a stamp that bears no character and how could the shadow of the cane be straight if the cane itself were crooked? The following conveys the same meaning:-

If you condemn a sin and then commit
the same transgression, shame upon your head.

Chapter Six

On the Evils of Knowledge and on Determining the Distinguishing Features of the Learned of the Hereafter and those of the Teachers of Falsehood

It is very important to ascertain what distinguishes the learned of this world from the learned of the Hereafter. By those learned of this world we mean the teachers of falsehood whose sole purpose in pursuing knowledge is to enjoy the luxuries of this life and to achieve power and position among its people. The Prophet said: "The most severely punished of all mankind on the day of Resurrection will be the learned one whom God has not blessed with His knowledge. He also said: "Do not acquire knowledge in order to vie with the learned, dispute with and silence the insolent, and win favour and popularity among men, for whosoever would do this would be doomed to Hell Fire." Jesus said: "How can you lead the night travelers along the way when you yourselves are perplexed?"

We find in history the same evidence. *Umar* said: "The thing I fear most for the safety of this nation is the learned hypocrite." Umar was then asked how one could be both learned and hypocritical, to which he replied: "When his learning does not go beyond verbal knowledge while his heart remains untouched and his works (betray no wisdom)."

Sufyan Al Thawri said: "Knowledge summons works and unless they respond, it departs." Ibn al Mubarak said: "As long as a person continues to seek knowledge he remains learned, but the moment he thinks he has mastered all knowledge, he recedes into ignorance."

Among the learned are those who would guard their knowledge and dislike the idea of sharing it with others; these will occupy the first depth in Hell. There are others who are in the habit of regarding their knowledge as equivalent to power and position; and if they are ever contradicted or slighted they become infuriated; these will occupy the second depth

in Hell. Others confine their knowledge to the circles of nobility and wealth and deem the poor classes unworthy of it; these will occupy the third depth in Hell. Others appoint themselves judges and hand down faulty opinions; these will occupy the fourth depth in Hell. Other learned men employ in their discourses Jewish and Christian argument in order to make their erudition seem great; these will occupy the fifth depth in Hell. Others regard their knowledge as something virtuous and honourable and continually dwell on it before men; these will occupy the sixth depth in Hell. And finally there are the learned who are the victims of vanity and conceit. Whenever they preach they upbraid, and whenever they are admonished they show resentment; these will occupy the seventh depth in Hell.

It has been related that Yahya ibn Yazid al Nawfali once wrote to Malik ibn Anas saying:

“In the Name of God, the Merciful, the Compassionate.

May His blessing be upon His Messenger Mohammad.

From Yahya ibn Yazid ibn Abd al Malik to Malik ibn Anas:

I have been informed that you wear fine clothes, eat choice food, recline on comfortable couches, and station at your door chamberlains. At the same time you have assumed the seat of learning and men have come to you from every direction, selecting you as their Imam and accepting your pronouncements as the final word. Fear then God and humble yourself. I have written to you this letter of advice. No one besides God has seen its contents. Peace with with you.”

Malik wrote back saying:

“In the Name of God, the Merciful, the Compassionate. May His blessing be upon Mohammad, His Messenger, and on His Companions.

From Malik ibn Anas to Yahya ibn Yazid:

The peace of God be upon you.

I have received your letter which I accept as the token of your interest

and sympathy, and as the evidence of your refined character. May God bless your piety and reward and prosper you for your advice. I seek the help of God; there is no strength nor power but in Him.

As to your charge that we eat choice food, wear fine clothes, station chamberlains at our door, and recline on comfortable couches, may we state that (at times) we do all these but usually beg the forgiveness of God. (May we, however, add) that God said in the Qur'an: "Say, "Who has forbidden the ornament of God which He brought forth for His servants, and who has forbidden the good things which He has provided"? (Surah 7 verse 32) Furthermore we know very well that abstinence from these things is better than indulgence in them. At any rate do not neglect us in the matter of writing and we shall not forget you. Peace be with you."

See then the sense of justice which Malik displayed; he admitted that to abstain from these things was better than indulgence in them, yet at the same time he handed down the opinion they were permissible, and he was right in both.

Chapter Seven

On the Intellect, Its Noble Nature, Its Definition, and Its Divisions

The Noble Nature of the Intellect: It will be superfluous to show the noble nature of the intellect (al-aql), especially because through it the noble nature of knowledge has been revealed. Intellect is the source and fountainhead of knowledge as well as its fountain. Knowledge springs from it as the fruit from the tree and the light from the sun and vision from the eye. How then could that which is the means of happiness in this world and the next not be noble or how could it ever be doubted?

Thus we find in the Qur'an that God called it light when He said:

“God is the Light of the heavens and the earth. The similitude of His Light is as if there were a niche wherein is a luminary...” (Surah 24 verse 35)

The knowledge derived from it was called a spirit, a revelation and a life. God said:

“And thus We have revealed to you an inspiration by Our Command...” (Surah 42 verse 52). And again:

“Is he who was dead, then We gave him life and bestowed upon him a light by which he is able to walk in the right way among the people...” (Surah 6 verse 122).

Furthermore, whenever God mentions light and darkness He means by it knowledge and ignorance respectively, as is evident is His words: “...He brings them out of darkness into light...” (Surah 2 verse 257).

It was reported on the authority of Aishah that she once said: “O Messenger of God! How do people excel each other in this world?” He replied: “In intellect.” “And in the Hereafter?” she added. “In intellect,” he replied again. Then Aishah said: “But are they not rewarded according to their works?” To which the Messenger of God replied: “O Aishah! Have

they ever achieved anything except in proportion to what God has given them of intellect? Their works will always be in proportion to the intellect which God has given them, and their reward will be in proportion to their works.”

The Prophet also said: “Indeed the believer who is most beloved of God is the one who toils in the service of God and gives counsel to his people, whose understanding is complete; who admonishes himself and consequently sees the truth and acts accordingly all the days of his life, with the result that he himself prospers and leads others to success.” And again: “The man who possess the most mature mind among you is he who fears God most, fulfilling best what He enjoined and desisting from what He has forbidden, although that man may be the least willing to obey.”

The truth, however, is that the word intellect (*aql*) is a term used interchangeably for four distinct meanings. In the case of such words, therefore, no one single definition should be expected to cover the several meanings of the term. On the contrary, each meaning should have its individual definition.

First is the quality which distinguishes man from the other animals and prepares him to understand and grasp the theoretical sciences (*nazaiyah*), and master the abstract (*fikriyah*) disciplines.

Secondly the word ‘aql is applied to that knowledge which makes its appearance even in the infant who discerns the possibility of possible things (*ja’izat*) and the impossibility of impossible things (*mustahiiat*), such as the knowledge that the two are greater than the one and that the one individual cannot be in two different places at the same time. It is what one of the scholastics meant when he defined the word ‘aql as some axiomatic (*daruriyah*) knowledge, such as the possibility of possible things and the impossibility of impossible things. This definition is right, as it stands, because this knowledge is existent and the application of the word ‘aql to it is clear. What is wrong, however, is to deny that instinct, and to hold that only this kind of knowledge exists.

In the third place the word 'aql has been applied to that knowledge which is acquired through experience (empirical knowledge), in the course of events. Thus he who has been taught by experience and schooled by time is generally called intelligent (aqil), while he who lacks these qualifications is called unintelligent, stupid and ignorant.

In the fourth place the word 'aql is used when the power of the instinct develops to such an extent that its owner will be able to tell what the end will be, and consequently he will conquer and subdue his appetite which hankers for immediate pleasures. Whenever such a power obtains, its owner, in view of the fact that he embarks upon an undertaking, or refrains from it only after a thorough consideration of its end rather than in answer to the urge of a carnal appetite, is called intelligent.

On The Intellectual Disparity Among People

People have disagreed concerning the disparity which exists among their intellects (*aql*). But there is no use in repeating the arguments of those of little knowledge. It is more important to proceed immediately to the declaration of the truth. The obvious truth in this case is that this disparity pervades all the four parts of the intellect except the second, namely, axiomatic (*daruri*) knowledge, such as the possibility of possible things and the impossibility of impossible things. Thus he who comprehends that two are greater than one will also comprehend the impossibility for one object being in two different places at the same time, or for a thing being both eternal (*qadim*) and originated (*hadith*). The same is true of all other similar fact and whatever is comprehended with certain comprehension free of any doubt.

The three other parts are subject to disparity.

As to the fourth, namely the power of the intellect to conquer the appetite, the disparity in it among men is evident and clear; in fact, it is evident and clear that, at times, even the individual betrays a certain degree of disparity therein. This is sometimes the result of variation in the intensity of different appetites. A wise man may be able to overcome one ap-

petite more readily than another; but the problem is not restricted to this only. The young man may fail to overcome the appetite of sex and desist from fornication, but when he advances in age and his understanding becomes mature he will be able to subdue his lust. On the other hand, hypocrisy and pride increase and grow stronger with age.

This disparity may also be the result of differences in the mastery of the knowledge which reveals the evils of the other appetites. Thus a physician may be able to abstain from some of the harmful foods, while another man may fail simply because he lacks medical knowledge, although he may be the physician's peer in intellect and of the same belief in the harmful effects of those foods. Again, the more mature the physician's intellect, the stronger will be his fear. Hence fear is an aid in the service of intellect, an instrument with which to overcome and break appetites. Similarly, the learned man is more capable of renouncing sin than the ignorant, because his knowledge of the evils of sin is greater. I mean the true learned men and not those of the flowing robes who dote and rave and prattle of things they know little about.

The Second Book

The Articles of Faith

Comprising Four Chapters

Chapter One

An Exposition on the People of the Sunnah and the Two Words of Certification; being the Pillar of Islam

All praise be to God, The Originator and the Perpetuator of what He pleases, The One and Only, there is no God but He, The Eternal Cause of all being, He begets not, nor was He begotten and there is none comparable to Him. Glory to God above that they associate! He is God, the Knower of the Unseen, and the Seen, He is the The Merciful, The Compassionate, He is the Sovereign, the Holy, the Peace, the Giver of Faith, the Overall Controller, the Almighty, the Compeller, the Majestic, He is God, the Creator, the Maker, the Shaper, to Him belong the Most Sublime Attributes. All that is in the heavens and the earth glorifies Him, and He is the Almighty, the All-Wise. All Praise be to God, the Lord of the Worlds. He is the First and the Last, the Manifest and the Unseen, He has knowledge of all things: (Surah 57 verse 3) Who guides whoever He chooses from among His servants to the right Path, Who has bestowed His favours on His servants, filling their hearts with the light of religion and its duties, sent down from the Throne of Glory to the heaven of this world by the steps of mercy. One mark of His Compassion: in contrast to earthly kings, though majesty and might belong to Him Alone, He urges the people to bring Him their requests and pleas, saying: "Will anyone call, that I may answer him? Will anyone seek My forgiveness, that I may forgive him?" Unlike the rulers of this world. He keeps an open door and does not screen himself away. He allows His servants to converse with Him intimately in their prayers, under all circumstances, be they in congregation or isolation. Not merely allowing, indeed, He gently urges and invites. How different are those feeble worldly kings,

Glory be to Him, therefore, so grand in His sublimity, so Strong in His authority, so Perfect in His graciousness, so All embracing in His goodness. God High Exalted said:-

“ There is nothing like Him ” (Surah 42 verse 11)

High Exalted, The Ever-Living, The Eternal Power, no fatigue or inability can take Him. No slumber can seize Him, nor sleep. To Him belongs all that is in the heavens and on earth. Who is there that can intercede in His presence except by His permission. He knows their future and their past, nor shall they attain any of His Knowledge except as He wills. His Sovereignty and Knowledge extend over the heavens and the earth, and He feels no fatigue in preserving them, and He is the Most High.

The Originator of the heavens and the earth, He created from yourselves your wives, and for the cattle mates, multiplying you therein.

The All-Hearing, the All-Seeing, He hears and sees everything, nothing can escape Him, and nothing can be hidden from Him however minute. No veil can obscure His hearing, nor darkness obliterate His Sight. He is God.

He is the Just and there is no justice comparable to His, He forbids injustice among His servants

The second word: the certification that the Messengers are sent by God and that He has sent Mohammad, the unlettered Prophet of Quraish with His Message to the worlds, to Jinn and mankind, with his Shariah which supersedes all others, and preferred him to all Prophets and made him exemplary. He has forbidden the perfection of faith by the witnessing of the oneness in saying: ‘there is no god but God’ without the saying in completion ‘and Mohammad is the Messenger of God’. He made it obligatory on mankind to adhere to whatever he conveys regarding the affairs of this world and of the Hereafter.

So whoever believes all this with a certainty of faith he is from the people of the truth and the Sunnah, and has distanced himself from mis-

guidance and those who invent falsehood.

We seek from God Almighty to make us and all Muslims steadfast in our faith out of His mercy, indeed He is the Most Merciful of those who give mercy. Praise and peace be upon Mohammad His servant and Messenger.

Chapter Two

The Steps to Guidance and the Degrees of Belief

Know that what we have mentioned in the previous chapter regarding Faith should be presented to the child in the beginning of his upbringing, so that he imbibes it into his being, so that its meaning reveals itself to him as he grows. At first he should memorize it, then understand it, then have certainty and belief, then believe wholly in it. This is the usual process. From the grace of God to man is that He makes his heart naturally capable of receiving faith without the need for signs or proofs, and without the need for learning the ways of argument and debate, rather simply by occupying himself with the recitation of the Qur'an and its expounding, as well as the reading of the prophetic sayings and their meaning. He should also occupy himself with all forms of worship so that his faith continues to deepen and grow due to the signs given in the Qur'an. What he receives of the Hadiths and their benefit and whatever shines over him of the light of guidance, and of what he can gain from heeding the discourses of righteous people and observing their submission to God, and their fear of Him, will be the first prompts for him, just as the seeds are sown into the soil, all this will be the means by which he will grow stronger in faith, and become firmly established as a good tree is firmly established with its roots in the earth while its branches reach to the sky. If he chooses to be from those who seek the way to the Hereafter, and is guided to it, then devotes his energies in science while keeping to piety and forbids himself from lusts by self discipline and struggle; then the doors to guidance will open for him, revealing the true faith by the guidance of the Divine light which is cast into his heart due to his striving in God's cause, as God Almighty promised when He said:

“Those who strive hard in Our cause, We shall guide them to Our Paths, and indeed God is always with the righteous.” (Surah 29 verse 69)

Chapter Three

The Book of the Articles of Faith

Regarding the Major Directives to Faith which we have Explained in Jerusalem,

we say: -

In the Name of God, The Merciful, The Compassionate

All praise be to God, the One Who distinguishes the people of the Sunnah, by the light of certainty, and preferred those who follow the truth by guiding them toward the pillars of Islam, distanced them from deviation and the misguidance of atheism, enabled them to achieve success in following the example of the Prophet and the footsteps of his honourable Companions, facilitated for them the route of the worthy ancestors until they adhered to a firm support that never gives way so that their hearts believed what they uttered in saying: "There is no god but God, and Mohammad is the Messenger of God." They recognised that the two words of certification of faith, although so brief, contain the proof of the Divinity in God, the proof of His attributes, the proof of His commands, and proof that Mohammad was His Messenger. Faith is founded on these four pillars, and each one of them has ten roots:-

The first pillar is in recognising the Divinity of God, its ten roots are: knowledge of the existence of God, His agelessness, that He is Eternal, that He is not corporeal, that He is not mortal, that He is not visible, that He is not limited in His direction, that His Presence is everywhere, that He is All Aware, that He is One.

The second pillar is in His Attributes, its ten roots are: knowledge of His being Ever Living, All Knowing, All Powerful, Ever Loving, All Hearing, All Seeing, the Best in Speech, Above Causing Accidents, His speech knowledge and will are eternal.

The third pillar is in His Deeds, its ten roots are: The deeds of His servants are created for Him, that is of benefit to the servants, it is intended for God, that creation and invention are only for God, that He does not impose any burden on a soul greater than he can bear, that He saves the innocent, that He is not obliged to care for even the righteous, that there is no duty except what He commands, that His sending of Prophets is only a mercy from Him, and that the Prophethood of Mohammad is firmly established by the miracle of the Qur'an.

The fourth pillar is in things that are derived from hearing, its ten roots are: Evidence of the gathering and dispersement, the questioning by Munkur and Nakir, the torture of the grave, the Balance, the Path, the creation of heaven and earth, the rulership of the Imams, the excellence of the Companions according to their grades, and the conditions of leadership.

Chapter Four

The Articles of Faith

In Faith and Islam and what is Between them in likeness and difference, and what leads to their increase or decrease

Question: They have differed in saying that Islam is faith or something else, if it is something else, is it separate from it or is it joined to it?

Answer: It was claimed that they are one and the same thing. And it was claimed that they are two things which do not join. And it was claimed that they are two things, but they are joined to one another. We should say: In this there are three researches: research into the meaning of the two words in the language, research into calling them lawful, and the research into their effects in this world and in the Hereafter.

The first research is in language, the second is explanatory, and the third is jurisprudence.

The first research into language, the truth of it is that faith is to believe. God Almighty said: "... but you will not believe us..." (Surah 12 verse 17) means you will not believe. Islam is about submission and surrender, to heed and to follow. To forgo rebelliousness and arrogance. For believing has a special place in the heart, and the tongue expresses that. As for submission, it is for the heart, tongue and all senses, every belief of the heart is submission and forgoing of rebelliousness and ungratefulness, thus, confirmation by the tongue, thus obedience and control by the senses. According to the language, Islam is more general while faith is specific.

The second research is about calling them lawful, it has been used in succession, successively and differently and in interrelation. As for succession, it is in His saying, Glory be to Him: "Then We evacuated the believers who were therein, * And we found no Muslims there except one household." (Surah 51 verse 35-36) By likeness there was only one house. And Glory be to Him said: "O my people, if you believe in God, then put your trust in Him, if you are Muslims." (Surah 10 verse 84). As

to what is different, God Almighty has said: "The Bedouin say: "We believe". Say: "You do not believe, but say: "We submit to the will of God" (we have become Muslim) (Surah 49 verse 14). The meaning of this is that they have submitted externally, but the faith here is what the heart believes, but their declaration of Islam is the external submission by the tongue and the senses.

But as for the interrelation it is what is related about the Prophet, when he was asked: "What is the best deed?" He replied: "To believe in God and His Messenger." The questioner then asked: "What is the best in Islam?" He replied: "The faith."

The Third research is on the lawful rulings. Islam and faith are two rulings, for the Hereafter and the life. As to the Hereafter, it is the extrication from the Fire and the prevention of having to abide there, as the Prophet said: "God will order those who have faith equal to the weight of a grain of mustard seed to be taken out from Hell." The ruling for the life is related to the external of any person which belongs to others, it is created by circumstances, while the internal belongs to himself and is between himself and God Almighty.

Question: If I say that the ancestors have agreed that the faith increases and decreases, it increases by obedience, and decreases by committing sins. If believing is the faith, can it be imagined that there is in it increase or decrease?

I would say that the ancestors are the just witnesses and nobody is more just than they in what they said, whatever they said is the truth, but the matter is in its understanding. There is evidence that deeds are not a part of faith nor of the pillars of its existence, but are added to it as extras, the increase does exist and the decrease exists, and nothing increases by itself, as you cannot say that a person increases on account of having a head, but you can say that he has been increased on account of growing a beard or being fat. Likewise it cannot be said that prayer increases by bowing and prostrating, but it increases by manner and ordinance. This is a declaration that faith exists in different circumstances according to its increase or decrease.

The Third Book

The Mysteries of Purity

Purity has four levels:

The first level is purification from ahdath impurity and refuse.

The second level is purification of all the senses from sin.

The third level is purification of the heart from immorality and odious depravity.

The fourth level is purification of the spirit from all others except God Almighty, it is the purification made by the Prophets and the truthful.

Chapter One

The Purification from Impurities

Examining what is related to that which is removed, what removes it and the action of removing it

Firstly the matter that is removed:

Filth. This is of three types, solid, animal, and parts of animals.

Solid matter is all pure except intoxicants, and anything which has been brewed or distilled.

Animals are all pure except dogs and pigs, and that which is derived from them. If they are dead they are all impure, except five: the human, fish, locusts, and the worm of the apple, this means that any food whose nature has changed, and types of flies and beetles, etc., which do not contaminate water if it has contact with them.

Parts of animals are of two kinds: first what is cut from them, this is classified as dead. Hair does not pollute whether cut off or fallen in death, while bones pollute. The second kind is any liquid matter which exudes from inside, so whatever is unchanged or has been stored is pure, such as tears, sweat, saliva, sputum. Whatever is stored and changes is impure, except that which is reproductive material, such as semen and ova. Pus, excrement, and urine are all impure from any kind of animal. The exemption from these impurities, whether great or small, are five:

First cleansing by means of a stone after a call of nature, would be sufficient if nothing is passed afterwards.

Second is the mud found in the streets and the dust of refuse on the roadways, these are exempt. You should know that if any of these accidentally falls upon your garments then the degree of its impurity is equal to the degree of your attempt to avoid it.

The Third is the impure matter which collects on the soles of your shoes from the roadways, it will be sufficient to rub it off.

The Fourth is the blood of fleas whether a great or small amount, except where it is excessive, whether upon your clothes or the clothes of another person which you wear.

The Fifth is the blood of a boil and what comes out from it of pus. Ibn Umar (may God be pleased with him) had a boil on his face then he rubbed it so some blood issued from it and he prayed without washing. This means that it is confined to the blood which is mixed with pus. This also applies to the blood of the menses.

The Shariyah's pardoning the people from these five impurities indicates the facilitation it affords us in everything concerning purity. And whatever has been invented in this regard has no foundation.

Secondly: What Removes It:

These are either solid or liquid. The solid is for example a stone, this is pure because it has been dried, on condition that it should be solid and completely dry. As for liquid the only liquid which purifies impurity is water, however not all water, but only pure water which has not been mixed with other impurities.

What makes water impure; is when it has been polluted by any filth, and you would know this from its taste, colour or smell. If it has not changed and its amount is equal to two water skins, it is not polluted. The Prophet said: "If the water reaches the amount of two water skins it is not polluted." If it is less than that then it is polluted, according to Al Shafi'i.

As to running water, if it is polluted, then only that part of it which contains the pollutant is impure. Thus water is only impure from where the impurity runs into it, and not before that point. If the flow of the water is stronger than the flow of the impurity, then whatever is above the impurity is pure but what is below it is impure. No matter the amount, except if the two of them are gathered in one container and the amount is less than two water skins.

Thirdly the Action of Removing It:

If the impurity was something unseen, it will be sufficient to run water

all over it. If it was a visible matter then it must be removed. If the taste is unchanged then the matter is still there, if the colour remains, except in that which is attached to it, it is exempted, after you have rubbed and brushed it with your hand. If the smell remains this indicates that the matter is still there and it cannot be exempted, except if the matter has a powerful smell which cannot be removed. Rubbing and pressing several times continuously, is similar to rubbing and brushing. The only thing which removes the whispering doubt from your mind is to be aware that all things are created pure, so whatever you do not see of impurity over it, nor do you know of for certain, then you should pray with it without fear. The existence of impurity cannot be guessed at by presumption.

Chapter Two
The Purity of *ahdath*
Ablution (*al wudu*)
Ritual Washing of the Whole Body (*al ghusl*)
Dry Ablution (*al tayammum*)
The procedure of Ablution (*al wudu*)

Begin with the siwak. The Prophet said: "If it had not been for difficulty I would have made it obligatory for my nation to use the siwak before every prayer." The siwak is preferably used before each prayer, at each ablution and to change the taste of the mouth upon waking or during the fast, or after eating foods which cause an offensive odor. On finishing with the siwak you should sit down to perform the ablution facing the Qibla, saying 'In the Name of God, the Merciful, the Compassionate.' The Prophet said: "There is no ablution for anyone who does not begin with 'In the Name of God.'" This means that there is no complete ablution in the absence of mentioning God's Name at the start. And one should also say: "...My Lord, I seek refuge in You from the prompting of the Satans-
* And I seek refuge in You my Lord from their presence". (Surah 23 verses 97-98) Then one should wash the hands three times and say 'My Lord I seek Your Blessings,' then one should rinse the mouth three times and the nose by putting water into the nose three times and blowing the water out each time, then one should wash the face three times, then wash the arms three times until the elbow, then wipe the top of your head three times with water, then wash your feet three times until the ankle. You should always start with the right hand and the right foot. When you have finished you should raise your face to heaven and say : "I certify that there is no god but God and I certify that Mohammad is His servant and Messenger, all praise be to God: There is no god but You: I have committed sin and been unfair to myself, so I beseech Your forgiveness and I turn to You, so please forgive me, relent toward me, You are the

All Relenting, the All Merciful, my Lord, make me of those who turn toward you and make me of those who are purified and of those who are righteous.”

The procedure of Ritual Washing of the Whole Body (al ghusl)

One should begin by mentioning the Name of God, then wash one's hands three times, then remove from the body all impurities, then one should wash as one would do for prayer (wudu), then wash the whole body under running water from over the head. It is obligatory to perform ghusl after sexual intercourse, and after the menstrual period in women.

These are the ordinances of wudu and ghusl for those who seek the path of the Hereafter.

The procedure of Dry Ablution (al tayammum)

Whoever does not find water because none is available or too far to fetch or if one is prevented from reaching water, or if the amount of water available is needed for his thirsty companions, or the water belongs to another who will not sell any except at an excessive price, or if one is wounded or ill and fearing that the use of water might harm one's ailment, then you may wait until the time of prayer is due and search for some dry clean dust from a high point, and press both palms of your hands onto the dry pure soft dust and rub your two hands together once, then wipe the face once, and utter the intention to perform wudu, then you should press your hands to the dust again and wipe your right arm until the elbow, then the left until the elbow. Then you may pray the obligatory prayer after which you may perform any voluntary prayer. But if you are going to join two obligatory prayers together, you should perform another dry ablution after the first prayer. Thus each obligatory prayer must have a dry ablution before it.

Chapter Three

Cleansing

Cleansing from Visible Refuse

This is two types: Dirt and Parts

The first type is dirt and fluid, these are eight:

One: What has infested the head such as lice, the cleansing of it is preferable by washing and combing and the application of ointments, and removing the eggs.

Two: What has accumulated in the folds of the ears; wiping will remove only what appears of it, but what is inside the ear should be cleaned gently after leaving the bathroom, if it is done too roughly the hearing may be harmed.

Three: What has collected in the nose of solids and liquids should be removed by putting water into the nose and cleaning it by expelling the water out.

Four: What has built up on the teeth and on the end of the tongue of plaque, should be removed by gargling and by the siwak.

Five: What has accumulated in the beard of dirt should be washed and combed.

Six: What has accumulated in the folds of the finger joints should be washed. The Arabs used not to wash their hands after food so they was much accumulation of dirt in these areas. For this reason the Prophet commanded them to wash the joints of their fingers.

Seven: The cleaning of the fingernails. The Prophet commanded the Arabs to clean their fingernails and to remove what is under them of dirt because it was difficult for them to cut their fingernails, so the Prophet timed for them cutting the nails, removing the hair under the arms and shaving the pubic hair every forty days.

Eight: The dirt which accumulates upon the body due to sweating and the dust of the road. A bath or shower will remove it.

The Second Type:

This is what develops on the body from its parts - they are eight:

One: the hair of the head, it should be shaved for those who wish to be clean, but there is no blame in leaving it long if you keep it clean and care for it.

Two: The hair of the moustache, the Prophet said: "Trim the moustache and leave the beard."

Three: The hair under the arms, it is preferable to pull it out every forty days, this is easy for those who are accustomed to it from the beginning, but as for those who are used to shaving it, it is sufficient to shave, it as the pulling is painful.

Four: The pubic hair should be removed either by shaving or plucking and it should not be left more than forty days.

Five: The nails should be cut because they are ugly if left long, and because dirt gathers under them.

Six and seven: The extra skin of the navel and the extra skin of the male organ. As for the navel it should be cut at birth, but as for circumcision it is the custom of the Jews to perform it on the seventh day after birth, we have been commanded not to do as they do, by delaying it until the child grows his first teeth, this is better and avoids any risk. The Prophet said: "Circumcision is an ordinance to men and honourable to women." But it should not be taken to excess in cutting too much in women, the Prophet said to Umm Atiyah while she was performing circumcision : "O Umm Atiyah, take little and do not do much, this is more pleasant to the face and preferable to the husband."

Eight: What grows in excess of the beard, we have delayed talking about the beard so that we can discuss and differentiate between the Sunnah and what is invention. They have differed in regard to what is excess,

so they said if a man can clasp his hand around his beard what appears beneath his hand is excess and should be cut, and thus ibn Umar and others have done. Others have said if you leave it, it is much better according to the saying of the Prophet "...leave the beard." It is, however, much better to trim the beard and shape it well rather than leaving it long giving an untidy appearance which prompts the tongues to backbite.

The Fourth Book

The Mysteries of Prayer

Chapter One

Merit of the Call to Prayer (*Adhan*)

The Prophet said, “On the Day of Resurrection, three people will find themselves on a ridge of black musk. They will have no reckoning to fear, nor any cause for alarm while human accounts are being settled. First, a man who recites the Qur’an to please God, and who leads the prayer to people’s satisfaction. Secondly, a man who makes the call to prayer in a mosque, inviting people to God for the sake of His good pleasure. Third, a man who has a hard time making a living in this world, yet is not distracted from the work of the Hereafter.

According to other traditions, the Prophet said: “All that hear the call of the Muezzin, whether they are Jinn, human or whatever, will testify for him on the Day of Resurrection.” And: “The hand of the All Merciful is on the Muezzin’s head until he completes his call to prayer.”

Commentators say that God was referring to Muezzins when He revealed the Qur’anic verse:

“And who is better in speech than the one who calls mankind to God and does righteous deeds...” (Surah 41 verse 33)

The Prophet also said: “When you hear the call, repeat what the Muezzin says. This is the recommended practice, except that on hearing the two sentences beginning ‘come to...’ one should say: “There is neither power nor strength except in God.” The response to ‘prayer has begun’ is: “May God establish it and preserve it as long as the heavens and earth endure.” At dawn, the call includes the sentence: ‘prayer is better than sleep.’ to which we respond with: “You have spoken truly and veraciously and given good advice.” When the call to prayer is over, one says: -‘O God, Lord of this perfect invitation and firmly established

prayer, endow Mohammad with favour, merit and exalted rank. Raise him to the glorious position You have promised him. You do not break Your promise.'

Sa'id ibn al-Musayyab said: "If a person performs prayer in a wilderness, an angel prays on his right and an angel prays on his left. If he also gives the call to prayer and the signal to begin, angels perform prayer behind him in rows like mountain ranges."

Merit of the Prescribed Prayers at Set Times (Salat)

Allah, High Exalted has told us in the Qur'an:

“...indeed prayer is a timed ordinance for the believers.” (Surah 4 verse 103)

The Prophet said: “There are five prayers which God has prescribed for His servants. For those who perform the, properly, without disrespectful omissions, there is a guarantee that God will admit them to Paradise. To those who do not observe them, however, God offers no such guarantee; He may punish them or He may admit them to Paradise, as He pleases.”

The Prophet also said: “The five set prayers may be compared to a stream of fresh water, flowing in front of your house, into which you plunge five times each day. Do you think that would leave any dirt on your body?” When they answered: “None at all!” The Prophet said: “Indeed, the five prayers remove sins, just as water removes dirt.”

Other sayings of the Prophet: “The five set prayers are an expiation, for there is something amongst them by which major sins are repelled.”

And: “What distinguishes us from the hypocrites is our attendance at late night and early morning prayers, both of which they miss.”

“If a man meets God when he has been negligent of the prayer, God will pay no attention to his other virtues.”

“Prayer is the pillar of religion; to neglect it is to prepare the downfall of religion.”

“Prayer at the appointed times.” (In answer to the question ‘which action is the most meritorious.’”

“If a man performs the five prayers, in a proper state of purity and at the times prescribed, they will be a light and a proof for him on the Day of Resurrection. But he who misses them will be resurrected alongside Pharaoh and Hamam.”

“The key to Paradise is ritual prayer.”

“After the affirmation of His Unity, no duty God has imposed on His creatures is dearer to Him than ritual prayer. Had anything been dearer to Him than this, it would have become a form of worship for His angels. As it is (each of them performs part of the prayer) some bowing, some prostrating themselves, some standing upright and some sitting on their heels.”

“Anyone who deliberately misses a prayer has forsaken his faith.” That is to say, he has virtually been stripped of faith, since its knot has been untied and its pillar has fallen. The (Arabic verb meaning) ‘has forsaken’ is used idiomatically, much as one might say that a man ‘has arrived’ when he is very near his destination.

“If someone deliberately omits a prayer, he ceases to enjoy the protective custody of Mohammad, peace be upon him.”

Abou Hurayra, said: “If someone makes his ablution and does it well, then sets out with the intention of performing the prayer, he is already in the state of prayer while on his way to it. With each two steps he takes, a good deed is added to his record and a bad deed is erased from it. So do not linger when you hear the signal that the prayer is beginning, for the one who is farthest from home will get the greatest reward.” They asked: “Why is that, Abou Hurayra?” and he said: “Because of all the steps he had to take.”

According to Tradition: “Of all a man’s actions, the first to be examined on the Day of Resurrection will be the prayer. If it is found to be complete, it will be accepted of him along with the rest of the works, but if it is found wanting it will be rejected along with the rest of his deeds.”

The Prophet said: “Abou Hurayra, command your family to perform prayer, for God will provide you with blessings too numerous to reckon.”

A scholar once said: “One who performs prayer is like a merchant, who does not start making a profit until he has recovered all his capital. In a similar way, one who performs prayer gets no credit for superogatory devotions until he has discharged his basic obligations.”

Abou Bakr used to say: “When it is time for prayer, get up and extinguish the Hellfire you have kindled for yourselves.”

Merit of Correct Performance (Ta’dil)

The Prophet said: “The prescribed prayer is like a pair of scales, whoever gives full measure will also receive in full.”

Yazid al Riqashi said: “The prayer of God’s Messenger was as even as if it had been perfectly balanced.”

Traditions of the Prophet:

“Two members of my Community may perform the prayer in such a way that their bowing and their prostration are as one, yet their prayers may be as far apart as heaven and earth.” (that is in respect to their humility)

“God will have no regard, on the Day of Resurrection, for that servant of His who does not straighten his spine between bowing and making prostration.”

“Is he not afraid; he who turns his face around in the prayer; that God may turn his face into that of a donkey?”

“If someone performs his prayer at the proper time, makes his ablution correctly, does the bowing and prostration properly and observes due humility, that prayer will rise up, all bright and shining and will say: ‘May God take care of you as you have taken care of me!’ But if someone performs his prayer at the wrong time, without correct ablution, not bowing and prostrating properly and not observing due humility, his prayer will rise up all dark and gloomy saying: “May God neglect you as you have neglected me.” Then when it has reached wherever God wishes, it will be folded up like an old rag and he will be slapped with it in the face.”

Merit of Congregational Prayer (Jama’a)

The Prophet said: “The merit of congregational prayer surpasses that of individual prayer by twenty seven degrees.”

According to *Abou Hurayra*, the Prophet once noticed that certain peo-

ple were missing from the assembly. He said: "I considered appointing someone else to lead the prayer, while I went to show my disapproval of those absentees by burning down their houses." According to another version, he added: "Any one of them would have joined the assembly if he had expected to get a marrowbone or a couple of knuckles."

According to *Uthman*, the Prophet said: "To perform the late evening prayer (Isha) in the assembly is equivalent to spending half the night in vigil, while to perform the dawn prayer (fajr) in the assembly is like keeping vigil throughout the night."

The Prophet also said: "To perform the prayer in congregation is to fill one's throat with worship."

Sa'ad ibn al Musayyab said: "In all of twenty years, the call to prayer has always found me in the mosque."

Mohammad ibn Wasi said: "Only three things do I wish for in this world; a brother to set me straight if I go crooked; a livelihood for which I do not have to beg; and a congregational prayer in which I am relieved of absent mindedness and which is recorded in my favour."

Hatim al Asamm said: I was once too late for congregational prayer and Abou Ishaq al Bukhari was the only one to commiserate with me. Had I lost a son, more than ten thousand would have offered me their condolences, for people find religious misfortune easier to bear than worldly calamity."

Ibn Abbas said: "If a man hears the crier (Muezzin) and does not respond, he does not wish for good and no good is to be expected of him."

Abou Hurayra said: "Better for a human being to have his ear filled with molten lead than to hear the call and fail to respond."

It is related that Maymun ibn Mihran once came to the mosque, only to be told that the people had all left. He quoted from the Qur'an: "Surely we belong to God and to Him is our return." Then he said: "Truly the value of this prayer is dearer to me than the governorship of Iraq."

The Prophet said: "If a man performs his prayers in congregation for forty days, never arriving after the "Allahu Akbar!" of consecration, God will grant him two absolutions; absolution from hypocrisy and absolution from Hellfire."

It is said that on the Day of Resurrection a group of people will be assembled, their faces shining like stars. The angels will ask them: "How did you conduct yourselves in life?" To this they will reply: "On hearing the call to prayer, we used to set about our ablutions, letting nothing distract us." Another group will then be assembled, their faces like radiant moons. In answer to the same question they will say: "We used to make our ablutions ahead of time." The next group to be assembled will have faces like the sun, they will say: "We used to hear the call to prayer inside the mosque."

It is related that early believers used to commiserate with themselves for three days if they missed the first 'Allahu Akbar' and for a whole week if they missed the congregational prayer altogether.

Merit of Prostration (Sujud)

The Messenger of God said: "The servant has no better means of approaching God than prostration in private." Also: "Whenever a Muslim performs a prostration for God's sake, God raises him one degree and absolves him of one offence."

It is related that a man once said to the Messenger of God: "Pray to God that He may include me among those who enjoy your intercession, and that He may grant me your company in Paradise." The Prophet replied: "Help me by making frequent prostration."

According to another tradition: "The servant is never closer to God than when he is prostrating himself in worship." This is the meaning of the words of God:

"...but prostrate, and draw closer to your Lord." (Surah 96 verse 19)
And:

“Their marks of their prostration are on their faces.” (Surah 48 verse 29) Some say this refers to the dust that sticks to the brow during the act of prostration, while others say it is the light of humility, shining forth from within. The latter view is more correct. According to yet others, it is the radiance that will shine on their faces on the Day of Resurrection, as a result of their ablution.

The Prophet said: “If a human being prostrates himself at an appropriate point in his recitation of the Qur’an, the devil withdraws, weeping as he says: ‘Alas! This man was bidden to prostrate himself and he obeyed, so Paradise is his. I was also commanded to make prostration, but I disobeyed and so Hell is my lot’.”

It is told of *Ali ibn Abd Allah ibn Abbas* that he used to make a thousand prostrations every day. They used to call him the Great Prostrator (*al-sajjad*).

It is related that Umar ibn Abd al Aziz never prostrated himself on anything but the bare earth.

Yusuf ibn Asbat used to say: “Young men, take advantage of your good health, before you become infirm, for I no longer envy anybody except a man who completes his bowing and prostration in prayer, now that my own time is too short for that.”

Sa’id ibn Jubayr said: “I look to nothing in this world for consolation except to prostration in prayer.”

Uqba ibn Muslim said: “No quality in a man is dearer to God than the longing to meet Him. At no moment is a man closer to God than when he sinks down in prostration.”

Abou Hurayra said: The servant is nearest to God when he prostrates himself in prayer, so that is the time to make many supplications.”

Chapter Two

States at Each Stage of the Ritual Prayer

The Call to Prayer

When you hear the call to prayer given by the Muezzin, let yourself perceive the terror of the Summons on the Day of Resurrection. Prepare yourself inwardly and outwardly to respond, and to do so promptly. Those who are prompt in answering this call are the ones who will be summoned gently on the Day of the Great Review. So review your heart now; if you find it full of joy and happiness, eager to respond with alacrity, you can expect the Summons to bring you good news and salvation on the Day of Judgment. That is why the Prophet used to say: “Comfort us, Bilal! For Bilal was the Muezzin and prayer was the joy and comfort of the Messenger.

Ritual Purity

When attending to ritual purity in the things that envelop you, do so progressively; your room, then your clothes, then your skin, do not neglect your inner being, which lies at the heart of all these. Endeavor to purify it with repentance and remorse for your excesses, and a determined resolution not to commit them in future. Cleanse your inner being in this way, for that is the place to be examined by the One you worship.

Covering Private Parts

You cover the private part; i.e. prevent certain areas of the body from being exposed to human view. But what about the shameful areas of your inner being, those unworthy secrets of your soul, that are scrutinized only by God Almighty. Be conscious of these faults. Be discreet about them, but realise that nothing can be hidden from the sight of God, High Exalted. Only through repentance, shame and fear will they be forgiven.

Facing The Qibla

As for facing the Qibla, in doing so, you turn your external face away

from all other directions and toward the House of God, High Exalted. Do you then suppose you are not also required to turn your heart away from everything else, directing it towards God Almighty? What an absurd notion, since this is the whole object of the exercise! The Prophet said: "When a man stands up to pray, directing his desire, his face and his heart towards God, he will come out of that prayer as on the day his mother gave him birth."

Standing Upright

As for standing upright, it means holding oneself erect - in body and in spirit - in the presence of God. Your head which is the highest member of your body, ought to be bowed down as a reminder of the need to keep the heart meek and humble, free of arrogance and pride.

Intention

When forming the intention, resolve to be responsive to God by performing the prayer in obedience to His command, by doing it properly, by avoiding things that invalidate or mar it, and by doing all this sincerely for the sake of God, in hope of His reward and in fear of His punishment, seeking His grace and favour by His leave.

Takbir

As for the Takbir (the words: Allahu Akbar), your heart must not gainsay the words on your tongue. If you feel in your heart that there is something greater than God High Exalted, though your words are true, God will attest that you are a liar.

Opening Invocations

When making the opening invocation be very wary of distinguished polytheism in yourself. It was concerning those who worship for the sake of human as well as Divine approval that God revealed in the Qur'an:

"...whoever seeks to meet his Lord, then let him do righteous deeds, and never associate any other in worship with his Lord" (Surah 18 verse 110)

When you say: “I take refuge in God from accursed Satan,” you should be aware that the devil is your enemy and that he is waiting for an opportunity to alienate you from God. Satan is envious of your ability to commune with God, and to prostrate yourself before Him.

Reciting the Qur'an

Where recitation of the Qur'an is concerned, we can distinguish three types of people: (a) those who move their tongues unconsciously, (b) those who pay conscious attention to the movement of the tongue, understanding the meaning while listening as if to a person outside themselves; this is the degree of ‘those on the right’, (c) those who start from awareness of the meaning, then use the tongue to give expression to this inner consciousness. The tongue may act as interpreter for the inner feeling, or as its teacher. In the case of those nearest to God, the tongue is an interpreter.

Bowing Down

According to Ikrimah, God is referring to the postures of standing, bowing, prostration and sitting when he says: “The One Who sees you when you stand in prayer, * And when you pray among those who prostrate.” (Surah 26 verses 218-219) Bowing (ruku) and prostration (sujud) are accompanied by a renewed affirmation of the supreme greatness of God. In bowing you renew your submissiveness and humility, striving to refine your inner feeling through a fresh awareness of your own impotence and insignificance before the might and grandeur of your Lord. To confirm this, you seek the aid of your tongue, glorifying God and testifying repeatedly to His Supreme Majesty, both outwardly and inwardly.

Then you rise from bowing, hopeful that He will be merciful towards you. To emphasize this hope within you, you say: “God hears those who give thanks to Him.” Acknowledging the need to express gratitude, you immediately add: “Grateful praise to You our Lord!” To show the abundance of this gratitude, you may also say: “As much as the heavens and earth contain.”

Prostration

Then you go down in prostration. This is the highest level of submission, for you are bringing the most precious part of your body, namely your face, down to meet the most lowly of all things; the dust of the earth. If possible, you should make your prostration directly on bare ground, this being more conducive to humility and a sure sign of self abasement. When you place yourself in this position of lowliness, you should be aware that you belong there. You are restoring the branch to its root, for of dust you were created and to dust you shall return. At the same time you should renew your inner awareness of God's majesty, saying: "Glory to my Lord Most High!" Repeat this to add confirmation, for saying it only once is not sufficiently emphatic.

When your inner feeling has clearly been refined, be confident in hoping for God's mercy. For His mercy quickly flows towards weakness and lowliness, not towards arrogance and vanity.

As you raise your head, say "Allahu Akbar!" and ask for what you need, making the supplication of your choice, e.g. "My Lord, forgive and have mercy! Overlook my faults of which You are aware!"

You then make a second prostration, reinforcing your submissiveness.

Sitting and Testifying

When you sit to make the testimony (tashahhud), sit decorously. Declare that all the prayers and good works you perform are for the sake of God, and everything belongs to Him. Such is the meaning of al-tahiyyat. Be inwardly aware of the Prophet, and on his noble person, as you say: "Peace be upon you, O Prophet, as well as God's mercy and blessing." Be sure that your salutation will reach him, and that he will return an even more perfect greeting to you. Then salute yourself and all God's righteous servants. Then testify to the Unity of God, High Exalted, and to the mission of Mohammad, His Messenger, on him be peace and prayers. By repeating this two-fold testimony, you reaffirm the covenant of God, and assure yourself of its protection.

End of Supplication

At the end of your ritual prayer, you should offer a traditional supplication, imploring and entreating with meekness and humility, confidently hoping to be heard. Let your supplication include your parent and the other believers.

Salutation

Finally, and with the intention of concluding your prayer, address your salutation (salam) to the angels and the others present. Feel a sense of gratitude to God, High Exalted, for having enabled you to complete this act of worship. Imagine that you are saying farewell to this prayer of yours, and that you may not live to see another like it.

States Conducive to Perfecting the Life in Prayer

These qualities can be expressed in many ways, but they are well summed up in six words, namely: awareness; understanding; reverence; awe; hope; shame.

Awareness

By conscious awareness we mean that state in which one's mind and feelings are in no way distracted from what one is doing and saying. Perception is united with action and speech. Thoughts do not wander. When the mind remains attentive to what one is doing, when one is wholeheartedly involved, and when nothing makes one heedless, that is when one has achieved conscious awareness.

Understanding

Understanding the meaning of one's words is something that goes beyond awareness, for one may be conscious of making an utterance, yet not be aware of the meaning of that utterance. What we mean by understanding, therefore, is an awareness that also includes comprehension of the meaning of one's utterance. People differ in this respect, not sharing a common understanding of the Qur'an and the glorifications.

How many subtleties of meaning we have come to understand in the course of ritual prayer! Things that had never occurred to us before.

It is in this context that prayer becomes a deterrent to indecency and mischief, for the understanding it brings is a positive obstacle to vice.

Reverence

As for reverence, this is something beyond both awareness and understanding. A man may address his servant in full awareness of his speech, and understanding the meaning of his words, yet without reverence, for reverence is an additional element.

Awe

As for awe, it is over and above reverence. In fact, it represents a kind of fear that grows out of the latter. Without experiencing fear, one will not stand in awe. There is an ordinary fear of things we find repugnant, like scorpions or bad temper, but this is not called awe. What we call awe is the kind of fear we have of a mighty king. Awe is the kind of fear induced by a sense of majesty.

Hope

As for hope, this is unquestionably something else again. There are many who revere some king or other, and who are in awe of him or afraid of his power, yet do not hope to be rewarded by him. In our prayers, however, we must hope for the reward of God, High Exalted, just as we fear His punishment for our faults.

Shame

As for shame, it is something additional to all the rest, for it is based on the realisation of one's deficiencies and the apprehension of sin. It is quite possible to conceive of reverence, fear and hope, without this element of shame.

Chapter Three

Internal Prerequisites of Prayer:

Actions of the Heart

The Need for Humility and Conscious Awareness

Many Qur'anic Verses and Traditions could be cited in evidence of this, including the words of God Almighty: "...and establish prayer for My Remembrance- (Surah 20 verse 14)

The obvious force of the imperative is to make something obligatory. Since heedlessness is the opposite of remembrance, how can someone who is heedless throughout his prayer be performing it in remembrance of God? The Almighty warns us in the Qur'an.

"...do not be of those who are heedless." (Surah 7 verse 205)

Here we have taken a negative imperative, with the obvious force of a prohibition. God High Exalted also says:

"...until you can understand all that you say, (Surah 4 verse 43)

This explained the reason for debarring those who are intoxicated from the mosque, but the term intoxicated applies by extension to those who are wholly preoccupied with temptations and worldly thoughts.

When the Prophet said: "The prayer is nothing but submissiveness and humility..." he used a particularly definite and emphatic construction in Arabic.

The Prophet said: "If a man's prayer does not deter him from indecency and mischief, he gains nothing from God but remoteness." Heedless prayer does nothing to deter a man from these vices.

The heedless are alluded to in the Tradition: "Many of those who pray derive nothing from their prayers except weariness and strain."

The Prophet said: "A man gets credit only for that part of his prayer of

which he is conscious.” This is confirmed by the Tradition: “When performing the prayer, one is conversing intimately with one’s Lord.” Speaking in a state of heedlessness is certainly not what is meant by intimate conversation with God Almighty.

To clarify matters further, let us consider the contrast between ritual prayer, on the one hand, and Zakat, fasting and pilgrimage on the other. A man may pay his Alms without being consciously attentive, yet the very act of parting with money runs counter to greed and is hard on the lower self. The case of fasting is similar; since it subdues the natural forces and breaks hold of the passions, which are the tools of God’s enemy Satan, its purpose may well be achieved in spite of heedlessness. As for Pilgrimage, it presents physical hardship and difficulty and involves painful struggle, whether or not its actions are performed in full awareness.

In contrast to these other religious duties, ritual prayer consists only in remembrance, recitation, bowing, prostration, standing erect and sitting down. As for remembrance, it is proximity to God and communion with Him. If its purpose is not conversation and dialogue, it must be a verbal and vocal exercise, set to test the tongue in the same way as the belly and the genitals are tested by abstinence during the fast, as the body is tested by the ordeals of Pilgrimage, or as one is tested by having to part with beloved money on paying the Alms. Without a doubt, this latter supposition must be wrong, for nothing comes more easily to the heedless than idle tongue wagging. It cannot, therefore, be a simple physical exercise. The sounds produced are significant only when they form articulate speech. Articulate speech must be expressive of what is in the heart and mind, and this is not possible without conscious awareness.

What is the point of praying: “Guide us to the Righteous Way,” if one is in a state of absentmindedness? If it is not intended as a humble entreaty and supplication, why bother with the idle mouthing of the words, especially if it has become a habit?

The purpose of Qur’anic recitation and expression of remembrance (at

various stages in the ritual prayer) is undoubtedly praise and glorification, supplication and entreaty, addressed to God Almighty. But the veil of heedlessness screen the heart from Him. Far from seeing or witnessing Him, the heedless worshiper is not even aware of Whom he is addressing, as his tongue moves purely from force of habit. How remote this is from the purpose of ritual prayer, which was prescribed for the refinement of the heart, the renewal of Divine remembrance, and to secure the knot of faith!

We have been discussing the case of recitation and remembrance, but our strictures in this matter are by no means relevant only to the spoken elements in ritual prayer, as distinct from the physical postures. As for bowing and prostrations, their purpose is definitely veneration. While one could be venerating God, through one's action, although unaware of Him, one might just as well be unconsciously venerating an idol set before one, or even the wall in front. It then ceases to be an act of veneration and is reduced to mere movement of the back and head, devoid of any hardship that might make it a real test.

Ritual prayer has been made the chief pillar of religion, the criterion for distinguishing between unbelief and Islam. It takes precedence over Pilgrimage and other forms of worship. It is unique in having capital punishment as the penalty for its abandonment. I do not believe that ritual prayer enjoys all this special dignity by virtue of its external motions, unless these are linked to the purpose of intimate communion with God. That is what has priority over Fasting, Zakat, Pilgrimage and so on; indeed, over sacrifices and offerings which entail self-denial through financial outlay. As God High Exalted says:

“It is not their flesh that reaches God, nor their blood, but that which reaches God is your piety,..” (Surah 22 verse 37)

What is meant here by ‘devotion’ is a quality that gains control over the heart, disposing it to comply with the commands it is required to obey.

What, then, of the ritual prayer, if its actions are without purpose?

You may say that I am going against the consensus of the jurists, if I make the validity of prayer dependent on conscious awareness, since they stipulate such attention only at the initial ‘Allahu Akbar’. But the jurists do not concern themselves with the inner life or the way of the Hereafter. Their job is to formulate the outer rules of religion, with reference to external physical behaviour. As for what is beneficial to the after-life, this is beyond the scope of jurisprudence, since no consensus can be claimed.

Sufyan al-Thawri, an early legal scholar, is reported as saying: “Without humility and awareness, one’s prayer is invalid.” It is related that al-Hasan said: “Any prayer performed without conscious awareness is a short cut to punishment.” According to Mu’adh ibn Jabal: “A man gets no credit for a prayer in which he deliberately notices those on his right and left.”

According to an authenticated Tradition, God’s Messenger said: “Though he performs the whole prayer, a man may be credited with no more than one sixth or one tenth of it. A man gets credit only for that part of his prayer of which he is conscious.” If this had been transmitted on lesser authority, it would surely have become a dogma, so why should it not be taken seriously?

Abd al-Wahid ibn Zayd said: “The scholars are unanimously agreed that a man gets credit only for that part of his prayers of which he is conscious.” According to him, there is actually a consensus to this effect.

In short, conscious awareness is the very spirit of ritual prayer. Attentiveness to the initial ‘Allahu Akbar’ represents the bare minimum required to keep the spark of this spirit alive; of God we beg His gracious support!

Medication Conducive To Inner Serenity

As a believer, one must magnify God High Exalted, in fear and in hope and in humble awareness of one's shortcomings. There can be no relaxation in any of this once faith has been achieved, although one's intensity will depend on the strength of one's conviction. Any slackness in prayer is surely caused by mental distraction, divided attention, failure to be whole hearted in communion, and a heedless attitude to worship. Random mental activity is the thing that distracts us from prayer; it must therefore be dispelled so that a feeling of serenity can be acquired. To remove the symptom we must treat the cause, so let us find out where it lies. Stray thoughts may be prompted by something external, or they may arise from within.

As for external causes, our attention is caught by anything that happens to engage our eyes or ears. We begin to take an interest in it. Then one thought leads to another and the process goes on and on. Seeing gives rise to thinking, then one thought becomes the cause of another. Sensory impressions do not divert those whose intention is strong and whose aspiration is lofty, but they inevitably distract the weak. The remedy lies in cutting off these causes by lowering the eyes, praying in a dark room, leaving no distracting objects in front of one, or reducing one's range of vision by praying close up to a wall. One should avoid performing the prayer on the street, in places where there is artificial decoration and on coloured carpets.

That is why very devout people used to worship in a small dark cell, where there was just enough room for prostration, for it is easier to concentrate in such conditions. Those who were strong would attend the mosques, keeping their eyes downcast and confining their gaze to the place of prostration. They considered their prayers to be perfect when they were unaware of the people to their right and left. Ibn Umar would allow no object to remain in the place of prayer, not even a copy of the Qur'an. He would remove any sword he found there and erase any writing.

Internal causes pose a more serious problem. One's worldly concerns may be many and varied, so that the mind does not dwell on a single sub-

ject but keeps flying from one direction to another. To lower the eyes is then to no avail, for plenty of distractions have already got inside. The way to deal with this is to make a deliberate effort to comprehend the meaning of the words one is reciting in the prayer, concentrating on this to the exclusion of everything else. It is helpful to prepare for this before the initial consecration, by reminding oneself of the Hereafter and that one is standing in communion in the awesome presence of God Almighty, and under His scrutiny. Before consecration for prayer, one should empty the heart of all its cares, leaving oneself free of potential distractions.

God's Messenger once said to *Uthman ibn Abi Shayba*: "I forgot to tell you to cover up the cooking pots that are in the house, for there should be nothing in the house to distract people from their prayers." This is a technique for quieting the mind. If mental agitation is not stilled by this tranquilizer, the only recourse is a putative that will strike at the roots of the malady. That is to say, one must examine the distractions that prevent the attainment of inner serenity. These will undoubtedly be traced to one's pressing concerns, which have become so important simply because of one's base desires. One must therefore discipline the lower self by abstaining from those desires and by severing those ties. Anything that distracts us from prayer is the adversary of our religion; the army of Satan is the foe. To hold it in check is more troublesome than driving it out, so let us drive it out and be rid of it.

The Prophet once prayed while wearing a cloak with an ornamented border, a gift from Abou Jahm. He removed it when he had finished his prayers, saying: "Take it back to Abou Jahm, for it distracted me from my prayer. Bring me Abou Jahm's cloak of course wool." The Messenger of God once had new laces put in his sandals. When their newness attracted his attention during the prayer, he had them removed and the worn laces put back. According to another Tradition the Prophet once found himself admiring the beauty of a pair of sandals he was wearing, so he made a prostration and said: "I have humbled myself before my

Lord, so that He will not be displeased with me.” Then he went out and gave the sandals to the first beggar he met. He then told Ali to buy a worn pair of tanned leather sandals, which he put on his feet.

Before it was declared unlawful for men to wear gold, the Prophet used to wear a gold ring on his finger. As he stood in the pulpit one day, he threw this ring away, saying: “It distracted me, a glance towards it and a glance towards you.”

It is related that Abou Talha once prayed in his garden where there were trees. He was attracted by the sight of a honey bird and he spent so long following its movements as it flew about seeking an opening in the foliage, that he forgot how many cycles of prayer he had completed. He told the Messenger of God about the temptation to which he had succumbed, then said: “O Messenger of God I offer my garden as a charity. Dispose of it as you wish.” According to a different source, he was distracted by the pleasant sight of the bees, buzzing round the fruit as he prayed in the garden. He mentioned this to Uthman, saying: “I offer it as a charity. Use it for the sake of God.” Uthman then sold the garden for fifty thousand.

Such conduct was intended to eradicate cause of mental distraction and to atone for deficiencies in prayer. This medicine tackles the the root of the disease; it is the only effective remedy. As for the gentler measure we proposed, such as calming oneself and concentrating on understanding the words used in prayer, they may be useful when passions are feeble and cares are only marginally distracting. But it is useless to try and calm oneself when the pressure of desire is strong, for it will attract you and you will attract it until it gets the better of you. You will be caught up in this process throughout your prayer.

Consider this analogy: There was a man beneath a tree. He wished to collect his thoughts, but the sparrows disturbed him with their chirping. He would chase them with a stick and then resume his train of thought, but the sparrows would come back and he would have to scare them away with the stick once again. Eventually someone told him: “This is

like being a slave at the wheel, going round and round forever. If you want to escape the vicious circle, you should fell the tree.” So it is with the tree of base desire. Thoughts are attracted to its ramifying twigs and branches, just like sparrows to real trees. Flies are attracted by filth and chasing them becomes a full time occupation, for they just keep coming back. Random thoughts are like flies.

Our base desires are numerous and human beings are seldom free of them. They all share a common root, namely, love of this world. That is the origin of every fault, the basis of every shortcoming, the source of all corruption. Filled with the love of this world, a person becomes so attached to it that he fails to make provision for the Hereafter. He then has no hope of experiencing the pure bliss of communion in prayer. Those who delight in this world can take no delight in God, nor in communion with Him. A man aspires to that which gives him joy, so if his pleasure lies in this world, he will surely seek it there. Nevertheless, one must continue to strive, turning the heart back towards prayer and reducing the causes of distraction.

This is bitter medicine, so bitter that we instinctively recoil from taking it. The sickness remains chronic and the disease becomes incurable. Great men have endeavored to perform two cycles of prayer without having any internal conversation about worldly matters, only to find themselves unequal to the task. No hope, then, for the likes of us! If only we may be safe from temptation during half of our prayer, or one third, so that our deeds are at least a mixture of good and bad.

In short, the worldly and spiritual aspirations in the human heart are like water poured into a cup full of vinegar; as water goes in, an equal volume of vinegar inevitably goes out and the two can never combine.

Chapter Four

Stories of the Humble,

(May God be Pleased with Them, and their Prayers)

It should be known that humility is the product of faith and the result of conviction, brought about by the majestic power of God Almighty. Those blessed with it are humble not only in their prayers, but at other times also, even when they are on their own or when they need to use the toilet. For humanity is caused by the awareness that we are always in the sight of God, by awareness of His majesty and by awareness of our human failings. It is by consciousness of these things that humanity is engendered, so it is not confined to ritual prayers.

There was once a man, we are told, who never held his head up to the sky in all of forty years; so great was his modesty and humility before God Almighty.

Some people assumed that al-Rabi ibn Khaytham mus and kept his eyes half closed. For twenty years he was a regular visitor to the home of Ibn Mas'ud. When the latter's maidservant saw him, she would say to her master: "Your blind friend is here." Ibn Mas'ud used to laugh when she said this. Whenever she went to answer the guest's knock at the door, she would see him with his head down and his eyes averted, Ibn Mas'ud would look at him and say, quoting from the Qur'an:

"...And give glad tidings to those who are humble" (Surah 22 verse 34)

Then he would add: "By God, if the Prophet had seen you he would have been so pleased with you." (In another version of this story the wording is 'he would have loved you,' and in another: 'he would have laughed.') One day, he was walking with Ibn Mas'ud when they passed the blacksmith's workshop he fell in a faint at the sight of the bellows and the fire blazing in the furnace. Ibn Mas'ud sat with him till the time of prayer, but he did not come round. He then carried him home, where

he remained unconscious till twenty four hours after having fainted, so missing all five prayers. Ibn Mas'ud stayed close by him, saying: "By God, this is real fear!"

Al-Rabi used to say: "When engaged in prayer, I never pay attention to anything, except what I am saying and what is being said to me."

Amir ibn Abd Allah was one of those who are humble in their prayers. He would sometimes pray while his daughter was playing the tambourine and women of the house were chattering freely, but he was quite insensitive to the noise and did not even hear it. They once asked him: "Does anything come into your mind during the prayer?" "Yes," he said, "the thought that I am standing in the presence of God Almighty, and that I am bound for Paradise or for Hell." He was then asked: "Do you get any worldly thoughts, as we do?" To this he replied: "I would rather be made a butt for lances than get that sort of thing in my prayer." He was also in the habit of saying: "Even if the veil was lifted from the unseen, my faith could not be more certain than it is now."

Another of these characters was Muslim ibn Yasar, the one who did not notice the collapse of a column while he was praying in the mosque.

One of these men had a gangrenous limb. Amputation was necessary, but it seemed impossible until someone said: "He will not feel anything while he is at prayer." The operation was in fact successfully performed during the prayer.

Someone said: "Prayer belongs to the Hereafter; to enter it is to leave this world." Another was asked if he had any worldly thoughts during his prayers. "Neither in my prayers nor at any other time," he said. Yet another was asked: "Do you remember anything during the prayer?" He replied: "Is anything dearer to me than the prayer, that I should recall it while I am praying?"

Abul Darda used to say: "The sensible thing is to attend to one's needs first, so as to have nothing on one's mind when approaching the prayer."

Some of them would keep their prayers short, fearing the whisperings

of the devil. We are told that, on a certain occasion, Ammar ibn Yasir finished his prayer rather quickly. When someone commented on this, he said: "Did you see me skip any of the essentials?" The answer was: "No!" He then explained: "I was forestalling the distraction of Satan. The Messenger of God said: "Though a man performs the whole prayer, he may get no credit for half of it, or a third, a quarter, a fifth, a sixth or a tenth. A man gets credit only for that part of his prayer of which he is conscious."

It is said that *Talha and al-Zubayr* were among a group of Companions who were particularly noted for keeping their prayers brief. They explained that they followed this practice in order to forestall the whisperings of Satan.

It is related that *Umar ibn al-Khattab* said from the pulpit: "A man's whiskers may turn gray in Islam, without his having completed one prayer for God Almighty." When the people asked him how this could be, he said: "Because he never achieves perfect humility, submissiveness and devotion to God in any of his prayers."

Abul Aliya was once asked about the words of God:

"...But are heedless of their prayers." (Surah 107 verse 5)

He said: "This refers to those who are heedless in their prayers that they do not know whether they have performed an even number of cycles or an odd one." According to al-Hasan, it refers to those who heedlessly let the time for prayer slip by. Others say: "This is directed at those who are neither happy when they pray on time, nor sorry when they are late in praying. They see no virtue in promptness and no sin in delay."

Jesus said: "God Almighty says: 'Through supererogatory devotions My servant draws close to Me'."

The Prophet said: "God Almighty says: 'My servant does not achieve salvation except by fulfilling the duties I have set him'."

It is related that the Prophet once omitted a verse from the part of the Qur'an he recited in the course of a ritual prayer. As he was turning to

leave, he said: “What did I recite?” Nobody spoke, so he repeated the question to Ubayy ibn Ka’b who said: “You recited such and such a Surah, omitting a particular verse. We are wondering whether it has been abrogated or taken out.” The Prophet said: “Good for you Ubayy!” Then he turned to the others and said: “What are we to make of people who come for their prayers, line up in their rows behind their Prophet, but do not know what he is reciting to them from the Book of their Lord? That is just how the Children of Israel behaved, so God Almighty spoke to their Prophet through inspiration saying: “tell your people: ‘You present your bodies before Me and you offer Me your tongues, but you keep your hearts from Me. What you are doing is futile’.”

These stories and Traditions help to prove the fundamental elements in ritual prayer and humility and conscious awareness, and that merely going through the motions, in a state of heedlessness, has little value for the life hereafter, God knows best. We pray for His gracious help and guidance.

The Fifth Book

The Mysteries of Almsgiving

Zakat

Chapter One

God Almighty has made Zakat, (Almsgiving) one of the pillars of Islam and has usually mentioned it immediately after the prayer saying: “And establish prayer and pay alms and bow down in the company of others bowing down.” (Surah 2 verse 43). The Prophet said: “Islam rests on five things: To certify that there is no god but God, and that Mohammad is His servant and Messenger, to establish prayer, to give alms...” God Almighty has warned those who do not give Zakat with dire consequences, for He says: “...those who hoard up gold and silver, and do not expend it in the cause of God, announce to them a painful chastisement.” (Surah 9 verse 34)

Certain inward attitudes and duties are incumbent on those who seek, through payment of the alms, the way that leads to the Hereafter:

1. Understand the Purpose and Significance

To understand the necessity and significance of paying the alms, how it represents a test of character, and why it has been made one of the fundamentals of Islam, even though it is a financial transaction and not a physical act of worship.

Three points deserve consideration here:

(a) Testing the Degree of Love for God

To pronounce the two sentences of the Confession of Faith (Shahada) ‘There is no god but God, Mohammad is the Messenger of God’ is obligatory as affirmation of the Divine Unity and testimony to the singleness on the One to Whom all worship is due. Complete fulfillment of this obligation requires that he who affirms the Divine Unity should direct his love to none but the One, the Unique, for love tolerates no partnership.

There is little value in mere verbal affirmation. The degree of love is tested only by separating the lover from other worldly things he loves.

Now, worldly goods are an object of love in everybody's eyes, being the means by which they enjoy the benefits of this world; because of them they become attached to life and shy away from death, even though death leads to meeting the Beloved. The truth of our claim to love God is therefore put to the test, and we are asked to give up the wealth which is the darling apple of our eye.

That is why God Almighty said: "Indeed! God has bought from the believers their lives and their wealth, that they shall have the Gardens.." (Surah 9 verse 111)

This concerns Jihad, the struggle in the way of God, which entails a readiness to sacrifice even life itself in longing to meet God Almighty. The renunciation of wealth is trivial by comparison.

Once this concept of testing the degree of love is understood to underlie the spending of wealth and material sacrifice, people fall into three groups in this respect:

Firstly, those who affirm the Divine Unity, fulfill their covenant and renounce all their worldly goods, setting aside neither pounds nor pence. They are unwilling to incur the liability to pay the alms: so much so that when one of them was asked the amount due on two hundred dirhams, he replied: "For ordinary people the legal requirement is five dirhams, but we must give up everything."

Thus Abou Bakr donated all his wealth, while Umar gave half of his. When the Prophet said to the latter: "What have you kept for your family?" He replied: "An equal amount." And when the same question was asked of Abou Bakr, he said: "God and His Messenger." The Prophet then said: "The difference between you is the difference between your two answers." For Abou Bakr, the veracious, had borne himself out completely, keeping nothing back for himself but the Beloved, i.e. God and His Messenger.

Secondly, at a lower level are those who hold on to their goods, waiting for occasions of need and seasons of charity. Their object in saving up is to supply their own needs, without extravagance, and devote what is left over to charitable purposes as the occasion may arise. Such people do not confine their giving to the prescribed of the alms. One group of the Successors (the generation following the Companions) maintained the view that wealth is subject to other dues apart from the Zakat. When al-Sha'bi was asked if this was the case, he replied: "Yes, have you not heard the words of God:

"Uprightness is not to turn your faces towards east or west, but uprightness is to believe in God and the Last Day, the angels, the Book and the Prophets, and to give away from your cherished wealth to your kin, orphans, the needy, the traveler, the beggars and to ransom a slave..." (Surah 2 verse 177)

God Almighty also said: "...and expend in charity from the bounty We have provided them." (Surah 2 verse 3)

And: "And expend out of the sustenance We have bestowed upon you..." (Surah 63 verse 10)

They maintained that these duties, far from being abrogated by the 'Verse of Zakat' form part of the mutual obligations of all Muslims. In other words, whenever a well to do Muslim encounters one who is in need, it is incumbent upon him to relieve that need, over and above his payment of the alms.

The correct legal opinion in this matter is that the relief of pressing need is a collective duty, resting on the Community as a whole, since a Muslim cannot be allowed to perish.

It may be argued that a well to do person is not obliged to pay for the relief of want except by way of a loan, and that no donation can be required of him once he has discharged his due by giving his alms. It could also be argued that he is nevertheless required to make a donation and that lending is impermissible, i.e. it is not permissible to burden the poor

with the acceptance of a loan. There is no unanimity on this question.

Thirdly, to resort to lending is to descend to the final level of ordinary people. Those who belong to this third group confine themselves to the bare fulfillment of duty, neither more nor less. This is the lowest degree, the limit to which all ordinary people confine themselves because of their miserliness, their attachment to money and their feebleness of their love of the Hereafter, as God Almighty said:

“If He were to ask you for them, and demand, you would be niggardly...” (Surah 47 verse 37)

What a difference between a servant whose property and person God has bought, with Paradise as the price, and one He does not even ask to give all of it because he is so miserly!

(b) Elimination of Miserliness

The Divine decree by which God Almighty bids His servants to expend their wealth, is also significant in respect of purging the habit of miserliness, which is one of the deadly sins. As the Prophet said: “Three are deadly; avarice indulged, passion pursued and self conceit.” And in the words of God Almighty:

“And whoever is saved from the greed of his own soul, those they are the ones who prosper.” (Surah 59 verse 9)

The habit of miserliness is only eliminated by making oneself accustomed to spending money, for to break an attachment one must force oneself away until a new habit is formed.

From this point of view, therefore, Zakat signifies purgation, in that he who pays the alms is purged of the deadly evil of miserliness. The purity he acquires is in proportion to his outlay, to his delight in giving away and to his joy in spending for the sake of God Almighty.

(c) Expression of Gratitude

The third factor is gratitude for the benefits received, for the servant is indebted to God Almighty for bounties both personal and material. Bodi-

ly acts of worship are an expression of gratitude for bodily blessings, while financial acts of worship express gratitude for material bounty. How mean one must be to see a poor man in needy straits, and yet be unwilling to give up two and a half or ten per cent of one's wealth in token of one's gratitude to God for sparing one the need to beg as others must.

2. Payment at Proper Time

The second duty concerns the time of payment. One of the good practices of religious people is to anticipate the moment when payment falls due, demonstrating their willingness to comply by bringing joy to the hearts of the poor, forestalling the obstacles time might place in the way of charitable action, aware that there are dangers in delay as the servant runs the risk of disobedience should he postpone beyond the appointed moment. Whenever the impulse to good arises from within, the opportunity must be grasped at once as heaven sent. 'The heart of the believer lies between two fingers of the All Merciful.' Yet how fickle the heart! Satan threatens poverty and bids us to commit atrocious and abominable deeds. Demonic suggestion follows hard on the heels of angelic inspiration. One should therefore seize the opportunity and fix a definite month for giving alms (if one is used to paying it all at once). One should endeavor to choose one of the most propitious times, resulting in extra closeness to God and compounding the value of the Zakat.

Such a favourable time would be the month of Muharram, since it is the first in the year and one of the sacred Months; or Ramadan, for the Prophet, who was the best of all beings, and during Ramadan he was as unstinting as the breeze that blows. Ramadan also enjoys the special virtue of the Night of Destiny, as well as being the month in which the Qur'an was sent down. Mujahid used to say: "Do not say 'Ramadan' for Ramadan is one of the names of God. Rather say: 'the month of Ramadan'." Dhul Hijja is also one of the months of great merit; as well as being a Sacred Month, it is distinguished by the major Pilgrimage, the Hajj, and the Well-Known Days (the first ten of the month) and the Numbered Days, which are the days of tashriq (the three days following the day of sacrifice on the tenth).

3. Give in Secret

The third duty is secrecy, for this is farthest removed from hypocritical display and reputation seeking. The Prophet said: “The most meritorious form of almsgiving is the effort to help a poor man, made in secret, by one who is himself of little means.” According to one of the scholars: “Three things are accounted among the treasures of righteousness, one of them being to give alms in secret.” This saying has also been attributed to the Prophet. The Prophet also said: “Let the servant do a good deed in secret and God will surely record it to his credit as a secret; if he reveals it, it will be transferred from the secret list and recorded among good works done openly; if he talks about it, it will be taken off both lists and recorded as hypocrisy.” According to the well attested Tradition: “Seven will God shade on the Day when there will be no shade but the shade of His Throne; one of them is a man who offers alms without his left hand knowing what his right hand had given.” In another Tradition: “Secret alms extinguish the anger of the Lord.” God Almighty tells us in the Qur’an:

“...but if you give charity secretly to the needy it is much better for you...” (Surah 2 verse 271)

The advantage of secrecy is that it confers deliverance from the perils of hypocritical ostentation and reputation seeking. As the Prophet said: “God does not accept from a braggart, a hypocrite or one who is always looking for gratitude.” He who talks about almsgiving is seeking prestige, while he who gives for all the world to see is after public recognition; these pitfalls are avoided by secrecy and silence. Some have taken such an extreme view of the merit of secrecy as to maintain that the recipient should not know the identity of the giver. Some used to slip their alms into the hand of a blind man, while others would drop them in a poor man’s path or in the place where he sat, so that he could see the gift without seeing the giver. Some would tuck their alms in the poor man’s clothes while he was sleeping; still others would convey them by way of a third party so as to hide the donor’s identity, the intermediary

being asked to keep the secret and charged not to disclose it.

Such measures were designed to extinguish the anger of God Almighty, and as a precaution against hypocrisy and reputation seeking. When ever it is inevitable that at least one person should be in the know, it is preferable to entrust the alms to an agent for delivery to the needy beneficiary who should not be known to his benefactor; for knowing the beneficiary carries the double danger of ostentation and expectation of gratitude, whereas knowing the intermediary carries the former alone.

Whenever fame is the donor's objective, his work will be in vain, since the purpose of almsgiving is to eliminate miserliness and to weaken the love of wealth. But the love of status has a stronger hold over the soul than the love of wealth, and both of them have deadly consequences in the Hereafter. In the tomb, while the attribute of miserliness will assume, as it were, the form of a stinging scorpion, the attribute of ostentationness will turn into a viper. We are bidden to render them both weak or to kill them, so as to ward off their mischief or at least reduce it. But whenever we seek recognition and renown it is just like reinforcing the viper at the scorpion's expense; as the scorpion gets weaker so does the snake get stronger. Things would have been better left as they were. The way to reinforce those attributes is to act in accordance with their demands, while the way to reduce their power is to combat and oppose them and to act counter to their demands. So what is the use of going against miserly impulses only to yield to hypocritical motives, weakening the lesser only to reinforce the more powerful?

4. Give Openly

The fourth duty, when one knows that such conduct will tend to encourage others to follow suit, is to let one's giving be seen. In doing so, however, one must be inwardly on guard against hypocritical motives. God Almighty has said:

“If you give charity publicly it is good...” (Surah 2 verse 271)

That is, in cases where display is called for, either to set a good exam-

ple or because a beggar has made his request in public. In the latter instance it is not proper to withhold alms for fear of publicity; rather should one give while making every effort to be inwardly on guard against hypocrisy. This is because, apart from the expectation of gratitude and risk of hypocrisy, there is a third danger in visible almsgiving, namely that of offending a poor man's dignity. It may be hurtful to him to be seen to be needy. But someone who begs in public is bringing the disgrace upon himself, there is therefore no sense in being wary.

Consider similar cases: It is forbidden to expose a person's vice so long as he keeps it private, and it is equally prohibited to spy on him and gossip about it. A flagrant offender, on the other hand, has only himself to blame when he suffers the penalty of public disgrace. Of like import are the words of the Prophet: "He who casts casts off the garment of shame has no cause to complain of slander." God Almighty said:

"...and expend of what We have bestowed upon them secretly and openly..." (Surah 13 verse 22)

He commends giving in public, also, because this has the advantage of encouraging others. His servant should therefore take careful stock, weighing this benefits against the risks involved, for the situation varies from case to case and from one individual to another. For certain people under certain conditions open giving is preferable. To one who is aware of the pros and cons, and whose vision is unclouded by desire, what is right and proper in any given case will be readily apparent.

5. Avoid Taunting and Hurting

The fifth duty is not to invalidate one's alms through taunting and hurting, as God Almighty said:

"...Do not spoil your charity by reproach and harm like the one who spends his wealth for show..." (Surah 2 verse 264)

The Prophet said: "God does not accept the alms of a taunter."

Anyone who grasps the significance of the three points we mentioned earlier, while discussing the purpose and importance of the Zakat, or

even one of them, must realise that he is a benefactor only to himself, through expending his wealth either to demonstrate his love of God, or to purge himself of the vice of miserliness, or to give thanks for the blessing of wealth in the hope of receiving more.

6. Adopt Humility

The sixth duty is to think little of one's donation, for to regard it highly is to invite that sanctimonious pride which is one of the deadly sins, making good deeds worthless. God Almighty said:

“...And on the day of Hunain when you were pleased by your great numbers, but it availed you none...”(Surah 9 verse 25)

It is also said that whenever an act of obedience is belittled, it is magnified in the sight of God Almighty, while a sin considered serious appears small in His eyes. Another saying has it that three things are necessary to make a kindness complete; thinking little of it, doing it promptly, and keeping it out of sight.

To make much of a gift is not the same as taunting and hurting, however. A man who spent his money on the construction of a mosque or hospice might well think it something to boast of, but taunting and hurting would be out of the question. Sanctimonious pride and self importance do tend to infect all acts of worship, and their antidote is knowledge and action.

As for knowledge, it must be recognised that ten or two and a half percent is a tiny fraction, and that to pay only this is to content oneself with the least generous level of expense, as we have explained above. This is something to be ashamed of rather than to boast about. Even is one's rose to the highest level, disbursing all or most of one's wealth, one should still reflect on where it came from in the first place, and for what purpose it is being spent. For all wealth belongs to God Almighty. It is to Him one should be grateful for being given it and being enabled to spend it, so why pride oneself on spending, for the sake of God, what is actually His property all along? And, if one's situation is such that one must look to

the Hereafter, spending for the sake of spiritual reward, why boast of giving what one expects to receive many times over?

As for action, one's giving should be done with a sense of shame at one's meanness and in holding back the rest of one's wealth from God Almighty. One's demeanour should be humble and abashed, like that of someone who is asked to hand back a deposit by returns only part of it and holds on to the rest. For all wealth belongs to God Almighty, and He would prefer to see us give all we possess. If He has not commanded His servants to do so, it is only because that would be too hard on them by reason of their greed. As God High Exalted said:

“If He were to ask you for them, and demand, you would be niggardly...” (Surah 47 verse 37)

7. Give the Best and the Dearest

The seventh duty is to select from one's wealth what is best and dearest to one - the finest and most excellent part - for God Almighty is Good and accepts only good. If the offering has been acquired by dubious means, it may not strictly belong to the donor and will then be disqualified. According to the Tradition reported by Aban on the authority of Anas ibn Malik: “Blessed is the servant who spends out of wealth he has earned without sin.” Not to make the offering from the best one has is to be guilty of bad manners, since it means that one is keeping the best for oneself, for one's servant or one's family, and so preferring others over God Almighty. To treat a guest in this fashion, offering him the worst food in the house, would be sure to annoy him.

That is to look at it from the standpoint of God Almighty. If we look to ourselves and to reward in the Hereafter, no sane person is going to put others before himself. Whatever we possess, we may either give it in alms and so make it truly ours to keep, or consume it for some immediate purpose and say goodbye to it forever. But it is unreasonable to concentrate solely on the present, neglecting to lay by for the future, God Almighty said:

“O you who believe! Spend from the best of the wealth you have earned and of that We have provided for you from the earth, and do not spend from what is bad while you would not take it for yourselves, except with closed eyes. (Surah 2 verse 267)

That is to say, you would accept it only reluctantly and with a feeling of shame, so do not select it for your Lord.

According to the Tradition: “A single coin may overtake a hundred thousand.” This happens when a person’s offering represents the best and finest part of his wealth, and is made in a spirit of pleasure and happiness of giving. Were he to offer a hundred thousand times as much, but out of the part of his fortune he disliked, that would only go to show that he would not offer to God Almighty anything he was fond of. That is why God finds fault with people who set aside for Him what they themselves dislike. God Almighty said:

“And they ascribe to God that which they hate for themselves, and their tongues utter the falsehood that all good things shall be theirs, Without a doubt...” (Surah 16 verse 62)

Some reciters of the Qur’an pause at this negation, stressing the falsehood of what those people say, before continuing with:

“... the Fire is for them...” (Surah 16 verse 62)

That is they have earned the Fire by setting aside for God what they themselves dislike.

8 Seek the Worthy and Deserving

The eighth duty is to seek out a truly worthy recipient for one’s offering (sadaqa), rather than to be content with just anybody who happens to fall within the eight categories of legally qualified beneficiaries. For among those generally eligible there are some with special qualities. Attention should be paid first to these special qualities, which are six in number:

Firstly, one should seek out those pious people who have renounced

the world and devoted themselves exclusively to the business of the Hereafter. The Prophet said: "Partake of no food but that of a pious man; and let none but the pious partake of your own." The reason for this is that your food will support the pious person in his piety; by helping him, you will become a partner in his worship. The Prophet also said: "Offer your food to the pious, and favour the believers with your kindness." Another version has the words: "Treat to your food those whom you love in God Almighty."

A certain scholar used to make the point of feeding poor Sufis to the exclusion of others. When it was put to him that he ought rather to distribute his charity among the poor in general, he replied: "No, these are people entirely devoted to God Almighty. If smitten with destitution, one of them might be distracted, so to revive one man's devotion to God Almighty, is dearer to me than giving to a thousand of those whose sole concern is this world." These words were related by al-Junayd, who expressed his approval and said: "This man is one of the saints of God Almighty." He then went on to say: "It is a long time I heard better words than these." It was later reported that this man had fallen upon hard times and had decided to close up his shop, so al-Junayd sent him some money and said: "Take this as your capital and keep your shop open; commerce is surely not harmful to men like you." This man was a grocer who used to serve the poor without charging them anything.

Secondly, the recipient should be chosen from among the people of learning, to support him in his quest for knowledge. Learning is the noblest form of worship, so long as it is based on right intention. Ibn al-Mubarak used to address his charity exclusively to people of learning. "I know no rank, after that of Prophethood, superior in merit to the rank of the learned. If one of them became preoccupied with his needs he would not be free to devote himself to knowledge and concentrate on study. It is therefore better to give them the freedom to pursue learning."

Thirdly, the recipient should be sincere in his piety and exclusive worship and devotion to God alone. This singleness of worship and devo-

tion (Tawhid) is apparent when, on accepting a gift, he offers praise and thanks to God Almighty, regarding Him as the source of the blessing rather than any intermediary. Such a man is truly grateful to God Almighty, recognising that all blessings flow from Him. Luqman said in his testament to his son: "Set no one as benefactor between yourself and God, but count the favours you receive from others as a liability."

If anyone gives thanks to other than God it is as if he does not know the true Benefactor and does not realise that the intermediary is under compulsion, subject to the will of God Almighty Who has endowed him with motivation and enabled him to act. The intermediary is therefore under compulsion to give; he could not choose to do otherwise after God Almighty had instilled in his heart that his well being both spiritual and worldly depended on his acting. When the impulse becomes powerful it demands a resolute response; it becomes irresistible and brooks no hesitation. It is God Almighty Who creates these impulses and arouses them to action. It is He Who strips them of weakness and vacillation, compelling the faculties to respond to their demands. No one conscious of this could pay attention except to the Cause of all causes.

Such awareness is more valuable to the giver than the praises and thanks he might receive from others, for that would be most useless lip service, whereas the help extended to this truly dedicated servant of God will not be wasted. As for those who lavish pride and good wishes in return for a gift, they may find fault when they are not satisfied and utter curses when they are disappointed, though cases vary.

It is related that the Prophet once sent an offering to a certain man, telling the messenger to remember anything he might say. This is what the man said on receiving the gift: "The praise belongs to God, Who neither forgets those who remember Him nor neglects those who thank Him." Then he added: "O God, You have not forgotten so and so (meaning himself), so let him not forget You." When news of this reached the Messenger of God he said in delight: "I knew he would say that." See how this man confined his attention to God alone.

The Prophet once said to a man: “Repent!” The man said: “I repent to God alone; I do not repent to Mohammad.” To this the Prophet replied: “The right has been acknowledged where it is due.”

When it was Divinely revealed that Aisha was innocent of the slanderous accusations leveled at her in the incident of the Lie, Abou Bakr told his daughter: “Get up and kiss the head of the Messenger of God.” But she said: “By God I shall not do so! I shall give thanks to none but God.” The Prophet said: “Leave her alone, Abou Bakr.” According to another version: “Aisha said to Abou Bakr: “The praise is God’s, not yours nor that of your friend.” The Messenger of God did not object to what she had said, although it was by his tongue that the Divine Revelation had reached her.

To see things as emanating from any source but God Almighty is the mark of the unbelievers, God Almighty has said in the Qur’an:

“And when God alone is mentioned, the hearts of those who believe not in the Hereafter are loathe, but when those other than Him are mentioned, they are joyful.” (Surah 39 verse 45)

If someone has not inwardly purified himself of seeing the intermediaries except for what they really are, it is as if his secret soul is still attached to a concealed polytheism. He should therefore devote himself to God Almighty to purify his affirmation of Divine Unity from the taints and stains of associating others with Him.

Fourthly, the recipient should be a person who has remained anonymous and kept his need to himself, not being given to fuss and complaint; or one of those magnanimous people who, though fortune has departed, still remain unaffected and preserve their high standards. God Almighty has said:

“...the ignorant would suppose them to be well off because of their self-respect, you can know their real condition from their faces, for they are not the ones who would beg of people with impunity...” (Surah 2 verse 273)

In other words, they do not make a nuisance of themselves by begging, for they are rich in their certainty and proud in their fortitude. Such men should be sought out by thorough investigation of the religious people in each neighbourhood, and by looking deeply into the circumstances of good and decent people, since the reward for addressing charity to them is many times greater than for spending on those who are vociferous in their begging.

Fifthly, the recipient should be someone saddled with a large family, or else disabled by illness or some other cause, so as to come under the import of the words of God:

“Charity is for the needy who are engaged in the cause of God so much that they cannot move about in the land to earn their livelihood...” (Surah 2 verse 273)

In other words, they are held in confinement on the way of the Hereafter by reason of family responsibilities, hardship or psychological problems. They ‘cannot move about in the land’ because their wings are clipped and their limbs are tied. This is why Umar used to give the household of the Prophet a flock of sheep, not fewer than ten, while the Prophet himself would suit his gift to the size of the family. Umar was once asked about the toughest trial and his answer was: “A big family and a little money.”

Sixthly, the recipient should be a close relative, whether paternal or maternal. The offering will then serve the additional purpose of strengthening ties of kinship, the reward for which is incalculable. Ali once said: “To present one of my brothers with a single coin is dearer to me than giving twenty in alms, while to present him with twenty is dearer to me than giving a hundred in alms, and to present him with a hundred is dearer to me than emancipating a slave.” Friends and fellows in a good cause should be preferred over mere acquaintances, just as relatives are put before strangers.

The Sixth Book
The Mysteries of Fasting
Kitab Asrar al-Sawm
Chapter One
On the Outward Duties and Regulations
(of Fasting) and the Duties Attending
the Breaking of it
The Outward Duties
The Outward duties relative to fasting are
six:

The first is to watch the beginning of the month of Ramadan (and announce it) at the observation of the new moon (al hilal). But if the clouds should make the observation of the new moon impossible then the length of Sha'ban should be extended days.

The second outward duty is intention (niyyah). Every night before the dawn of the following day the person should specifically and deliberately entertain the intention of fasting. If he should entertain the intention to fast the month of Ramadan but fail to renew his intention every night, his fast would not be valid.

The third duty is that, as long as he remembers that he is fasting, the individual should abstain (imsak) from intentionally allowing any material substance such as food, drink, snuff, and enema to enter his body. All these render his fast invalid.

The fourth duty is abstinence (imsak) from sexual intercourse. The definition of sexual intercourse is the disappearance of the glans of the penis (in the vulva). If a person, forgetting that he is fasting, should have sexual intercourse, he would not, because of it, break his fast. If, during the night he should either have sexual intercourse or experience an erotic dream, and wake up in the morning in a state of impurity (junub), his fast would not be broken.

The fifth duty is abstinence from deliberate seminal emission (istimna), either through sexual contact or through no sexual contact. For deliberate seminal emission breaks the fast. The person, however, will not break his fast if he kisses his wife or lies with her unless in doing so he emits the seminal fluid. Nevertheless both are disapproved except where the man be advanced in age and in full control of his impulses, in which case there will be no harm in kissing, although abstinence therefore is better and more desirable. If he fears that as a result of kissing (and toying) he may emit the seminal fluid, and yet kisses with the result that the seminal fluid is emitted, he breaks his fast because he was (deliberately) negligent.

The sixth duty is abstinence from vomiting because it renders the fast invalid. But if one cannot help it, his fast remains intact and valid. And if a person swallows phlegm or mucus from his throat or chest he will not invalidate his fast. This has been made permissible because of the prevalence of the affliction. But if he swallows either after it has reached his mouth, he will break his fast.

The Duties Attending the Breaking of the Fast

The duties attending (lawazim) the breaking of the fast are four, namely, making amends (qada), atonement (kaffarah), expiation (fidyah), and abstinence from food and drink for the rest of the day in imitation of those who are fasting.

Making amends (qada), is obligatory upon every responsible Muslim who has neglected to observe the fast with or without any excuse. Thus the menstruating woman, as well as the apostate, is under obligation to make amends for (every) fasting (which she has or he fails to observe); while the unbeliever, the minor, and the insane are under no such obligation. Making amends for days omitted in Ramadan need not be consecutively performed but may be performed either at different intervals or all at once.

The atonement (kaffarah), is not obligatory except after sexual intercourse. Seminal emission, food and drink require no atonement. The atonement consists of freeing one slave. If this is not possible, the fasting of two consecutive months will suffice; however, if this also be beyond the man's power he should feed sixty poor men, giving each a bushel (of wheat, barley or dates).

As to abstinence from food and drink for the rest of the day, it is obligatory upon anyone who broke the fast (without any excuse) or failed to carry out (all its requirements). The menstruating woman is under no obligation to fast for the rest of the day if she has already become pure. Similarly the traveler, who at the end of two day's journey, arrives not in a state of fasting, is under no obligation to fast for the rest of the day. It is also obligatory to abstain from food and drink on doubtful days when only one trustworthy witness has declared that he has seen the new moon. Furthermore, when on travel, unless it is unbearable, it is better to fast than not to fast. No one should break his fast on the day when he embarks on a journey if he has already begun that day by fasting, nor on the day when he comes in from a journey, if he has already begun that day by fasting.

As to expiation (*fidyah*), it is obligatory upon pregnant and nursing women if they should not fast for the sake of their children. Besides making amends for the days thus omitted, they should give in expiation a bushel of wheat to the poor for each day they did not fast. The aged man who does not fast (because of his infirmity) should give a bushel (of wheat) for every day thus omitted.

The Practices Connected with the Fast

The practices connected with the fast are six. They are delaying the time of the suhur, speeding the breaking of the fast by eating dates or drinking water before performing prayer, putting away the toothpick after sunset, generous giving during the month of Ramadan especially because of its special excellence which were discussed in the Book of Almsgiving, special study of the Qur'an and retreating (*i'tikaf*) into the

mosque especially during the last ten days of the month of Ramadan. It was the custom of the Messenger of God, upon arrival of the last ten days of the month of Ramadan, to roll up his mattress, fasten his mantle around his waist and, making his family do the same, continue his worship until the end of the ten day period), since during these ten days the Night of Power (*laylat al-qadr*) falls.

Chapter Two

On the Mysteries of Fasting and its Inward Conditions

Now that fasting is of three (successive) grades, namely, the fasting of the general public (sawm al-umum), the fasting of the select few (sawm al-khusus), and the fasting of the elite among the select few (sawm khusus al-khusus).

The fasting of the general public involves refraining from satisfying the appetite of the stomach and the appetite of the sex, as has already been discussed.

The fasting of the select few is to keep the ears, eyes, the tongue, the hands, and the feet as well as the other senses free from sin.

The fasting of the elite among the select few is the fast but God. Such a fast is broken by thinking on anything other than God Almighty and the Last Day, as well as by concern over this world, except in so far as it promotes religion which belongs to the Hereafter.

Chapter Three

On Voluntary Fasting and the Arrangement of Portions therein

Know that the desirability of fasting becomes more certain on special days or particular excellence. These days of excellence recur either annually, monthly or weekly.

Besides those of Ramadan, the annual days of excellence are the day of *Arafah* (*Yawm Arafah*), the day of Ashura (*Yawm Ashura*), the first ten days of *al-Muharram*. Similarly the sacred months are in their entirety a fitting time for fasting, and of special excellence.

The Messenger of God was in the habit of frequently fasting during (the month) of Sha'ban to the extent where it would be thought that he was in Ramadan. In another Tradition: "Besides the month of Ramadan the most excellent month for fasting is the month of God, *al-Muharram*." This is because *al-Muharram* is the first month of the year; thus to commence the year right is more pleasing to God Almighty and gives greater hope that His blessing will continue through. The Messenger of God also said: "The fast of one single day during Ramadan is more excellent than that of thirty days during another sacred month." In another Tradition: "He who fasts three days, Thursday, Friday and Saturday, during a sacred month, will be credited by God with nine hundred years of worship for each day." And again: "When the ides of Sha'ban are gone, there should be no fasting until Ramadan is on." It is therefore desirable that one should, if he were fasting during Sha'ban, break his fast a few days before the beginning of Ramadan. But if he should continue his fast through Sha'ban into Ramadan his action will be perfectly permissible since the Messenger of God himself has done that once, although, ordinarily, he allowed a period of no fasting to intervene. Nor is it permissible for him to prepare for the arrival of *Ramadan* with a fast of two or three days from Sha'ban unless he observes the corresponding portions.

Some of the Companions disapproved of fasting the whole of the month of Rajab lest it would become equal to the month of *Ramadan* in excellence and importance. The excellent months (*al-ashur al-fadilah*) are *Dhu-al-Hijjah*, *al-Muharram*, *Rajab* and *Sha'ban*, while the sacred months (*al-ashhur al-hurum*) are *Dhu-al-Qa'dah*, *Dhu-al-Hijjah*, *al-Muharrum* and *Rajab*. One of these (*i.e. Rajab*) stands alone, and three follow successively one after the other. The most excellent of these of *Dhu-al-Hijjah* because in it fall the appointed days (*al-ayyam al-ma'lumat*) and the numbered days (*al-ayyam al-ma'dudat*). *Dhu-al-Qa'dah* is one of the sacred months as well as one of the months of Pilgrimage. On the other hand Shawwal is one of the months of Pilgrimage but not one of the sacred months, while neither *al-Muharrum* nor *Rajab* is a month of Pilgrimage.

The Messenger of God, as we see it recorded in the following Tradition, once said: "No good works are more excellent or more acceptable to God Almighty than those which are performed during the (first) ten days of *Dhu-al-Hijjah*. Indeed the fast on one of those days is equal to the fast of one whole year, and the prayer during one of these nights is equivalent to the prayer during the Night of Power (*laylat al-qadr*).” He was then asked: "Not even holy war for the cause of God is better?" To which he replied: "Not even holy war for the cause of God is better except when the person's steed is killed and his own blood is shed."

The excellent days which recur every month are the first, the middle and the last days of each month. In the middle of each month fall the days of the bright nights (*al-ayyam al bid*). These are the thirteenth, the fourteenth and the fifteenth days of each month.

The excellent days which recur every week are Monday, Thursday and Friday. These are the excellent days of the week on which it is desirable to fast and to do good, since, because of the special beneficence of these days, the reward of the acts performed on them is multiplied in double.

As to life long fasting (*sawm al-dahr*) it is all inclusive. Mystics (*salikun*) hold different views concerning it. Some of them, basing their opinions on several Traditions, have viewed it with disfavour. The truth of the matter is that it is viewed with disfavour for two reasons; one is that by fasting the whole duration of his life, the person will have to abstain from eating even on the two feasts, [namely the feast of Ramadan (*al-Fitr*) and the feast of the Sacrifice (*al-Adha*)] as well as on the other days of orientation (*ayyam al-tashriq*); the other is that by doing so, he departs from the established practice of the Messenger of God and makes fasting a yoke for himself although God would like him to enjoy his liberties just as much as He would want him to fulfill his obligations. If, however, there are no such (dangers) and the person deems it good for himself to observe a life long fast, let him by all means do so since several of the Companions and the followers have done the same.

The Seventh Book

The Mysteries of Pilgrimage

Chapter One

On The Excellent Merit of Pilgrimage

God Almighty said:

“And proclaim the Pilgrimage among people, and they shall come to you on foot, and on every means from everywhere-” (Surah 22 verse 27)

Qatada said that when God Almighty commanded Ibrahim, and our Prophet and every chosen servant to proclaim the Pilgrimage among the people, he declared: “O people! God Almighty has built a House, so make Pilgrimage to it!”

God Almighty said:

“That they may gain benefit for themselves there...” (Surah 22 verse 28)

When some referred this to trading at the season of Pilgrimage and reward in the Hereafter, one of the elders said: “By the Lord of the Ka’bah, may they be forgiven!”

The words of God Almighty in which Satan is made to say:-

“...I will waylay them on Your Straight Path-” (Surah 7 verse 16)

has been interpreted as meaning that Satan lurks on the road to Makkah to keep people from getting there.

The Prophet said: “He who make Pilgrimage to the House, avoiding indecent and immoral behaviour, emerges from his sins like a newborn babe.” The Prophet also said: “Satan never appears smaller, more abject and more furious than on the day of Arafat.” This is simply because he sees mercy descending and sees God Almighty, overlooking serious sins, for it is said that the only expiation for certain sins is standing at Arafat. (Ja’far ibn Mohammad attributes this saying to the Messenger of God.)

One of those saintly people endowed with spiritual insight mentioned that Iblis, on him be the curse of God, appeared to him at Arafat in human form. He was thin, jaundiced, tearful and stooping. When asked the reason for his weeping, he said: "The fact that the Pilgrims have set out towards God alone and not for doing business, I say, they have God alone as their destination. I fear they will not be thwarted, and that makes me unhappy." He was then asked the cause of his thinness and he said: "The neighing of the horses in the way of God Almighty. It would please me better if they were in my service." The reason for his jaundiced complexion? "The way they all assist each other in obedience. It would suit me better if they would help each other to disobey." And what gave him that stoop? "When a creature prays: 'Grant me I beseech You a good conclusion,' then I say: 'Woe is me!' When he takes delight in his good work I am afraid he may have achieved sagacity."

The Prophet said: "If someone sets out from his home as a Pilgrim or Visitant (mu'tamir) and then dies, he is granted the reward of a Pilgrim or Visitant till the Day of Resurrection. Anyone who dies in either of the Sanctuaries (Makkah or Madinah) is not subject to review or reckoning, but is told to enter Paradise."

The Prophet also said: "A blessed Pilgrimage is better than this world and all it contains. For a blessed Pilgrimage there is no reward but Paradise."

Also: "Pilgrims and Visitants are the emissaries and visitors of God Almighty, if they petition Him He gives what they ask, if they seek His forgiveness He forgives them, if they call on Him He answers, and if they seek intercession it is granted."

According to a Tradition handed down by the family of the Prophet, on them be peace: "No one sins more grievously than he who stands at Arafat and supposes that God Almighty has not forgiven him."

According to ibn Abbas, the Prophet said: "One hundred and twenty mercies descend upon this House each day; sixty for the circumambu-

lants, forty for those performing prayers and twenty for those who just look at it.”

Another Tradition says: “Make frequent circuits of the House, for this will be among the glories of your records on the Day of Resurrection, and the most fortunate action credited to you.”

Circumambulation is therefore commendable on its own account, not only as part of the Pilgrimage or Visitation. Tradition recounts: “To circuit seven times, barefoot or bareheaded, is as meritorious as freeing a slave, while he who circumambulates seven times in the rain is forgiven all his previous sins.”

It is said that when God Almighty forgives a sin for one servant at the place of standing (the plain of Arafat), He forgives it for everyone there who is guilty of it. One of the elders said that when the Day of Arafat coincides with the Day of Congregation (i.e. falls on a Friday), all those present at Arafat are forgiven and it is the most excellent day in the world.

It was on such a day that the Messenger of God made his Farewell Pilgrimage. While he was standing there he received the Revelation from God Almighty:-

“...Today I have perfected for you your Religion and completed My Grace on you, I have chosen Islam for you as your Religion...” (Surah 5 verse 3)

The people of the Book said: “If this revelation had come down to us we would have made it a festival day.” Umar said: “I am witness to the fact that it was on a double festival day that this Revelation came down to God’s Messenger as he was standing at Arafat, the Day of Arafat and the day of Congregation.”

The Prophet said: “O God, forgive the Pilgrim and those for whom the Pilgrim seeks forgiveness!”

It is related that *Ali ibn Muwaffaq* made several Pilgrimages on behalf of the Messenger of God. He said: “I then saw the Messenger of God in a

dream and he asked me: 'Ibn Muwaffaq, did you make Pilgrimage on my behalf?' When I said 'Yes', he said: 'And you cried '*labbayk*' (at Your service Lord!) on my behalf?' I confirmed this and he said: 'Then I shall reward you for it on the Day of Resurrection, I shall take you by the hand at the waiting place and lead you into Paradise, while all creatures are in dread of the Reckoning'."

According to Mujahad and other scholars, when the Pilgrims reach *Makkah* they are met by the angels, who salute those riding camels, shake hands with those riding donkeys, and embrace those walking on foot. Al-Hasan says that anyone who dies just after Ramadan, just after a holy campaign or just after a Pilgrimage, dies a martyr. Umar said: "The Pilgrim is forgiven, as are those for whom he seeks forgiveness in the holy months of *Dhul Hijja*, *Muharram* and *Safar*, and twenty days of First *Rabi*."

It was the customary practice of the elders to see the warriors off on campaign and to greet the returning Pilgrims, kissing them between the eyes and asking for their prayers; they did this promptly, before they had time to become sullied with sins.

Ali ibn Muwaffaq is reported as saying: "I made Pilgrimage one year and when the Night of Arafat arrived I slept at Mina, in the Mosque of *al-Khayf*. There I dreamt that I saw two angels descending from heaven, clad in garments of green. One of them called out to his companion: "O servant of God!" and the other responded with: "At your service, O servant of God!" The first then asked: "Do you know how many came on Pilgrimage this year to the House of God Almighty?" "No." "Six hundred thousand made the Pilgrimage to the House of our Lord. Do you know how many of them were accepted?" "No." "Only six souls." The two angels then rose into the air and disappeared from my view. At this point I awoke in dismay, feeling deep anxiety and concern. I said to myself: "If only six souls had their Pilgrimages accepted, where am I placed?" I then joined the stampede from Arafat, stopping at Muzdalifah. I began to ponder how great was the multitude and how few would find

acceptance, till sleep overtook me and I saw the two figures descending as before. They hailed each other, then one said: "Do you know what our Lord has decreed tonight?" "No." "To each of the six He has given a hundred thousand." I awoke this time with a feeling of indescribable joy."

He is further reported as saying: "I went on Pilgrimage one year, and after completing all the rites I thought about those whose Pilgrimages would not be accepted. Then I said: "O God, I donate my Pilgrimage and give the merit of it to someone whose Pilgrimage has not been accepted." Then I dreamt of the Lord of Might, Glorious is His Majesty, Who said to me: 'Ali, you would be more generous than I, though it is I Who have created generosity and the generous! I Who am the Most Bounteous of the bountiful, the Most Munificent of the munificent, more Worthy of bounty and generosity than the entire universe. I have bestowed all whose Pilgrimages I have not accepted upon those who have won my acceptance'."

Excellence of the Ka'bah and of Makkah the Ennobled

The Prophet said: God has promised this House that it will be visited every year by six hundred thousand Pilgrims. If they fall short of this number, God Most Gracious, makes it up from among the angels. The Ka'bah will be raised up at the Resurrection as if a bridal procession; all who have made the Pilgrimage to it will go around it, hanging on to its coverings, till it enters Paradise and they enter with it."

According to Tradition: "The Black Stone is a ruby of Paradise. It will be raised on the Day of Resurrection with a pair of eyes and a tongue with which to speak, testifying for all who have touched it with truth and sincerity." The Prophet used to kiss it often. It is related that he also prostrated himself upon it. If he rode on a camel while circuiting around it, he touched it with a crooked staff and then kissed the end of the staff.

Umar kissed it and then said: "I know you are a stone that neither harms nor helps, and had I not seen God's Messenger kiss you, I would

not have kissed you.” Then he wept, sobbing loudly. On turning round he saw Ali and said: “Here tears are shed and prayers are answered, father of al-Hasan!” But Ali replied: “Oh yes, Commander of the Believers, it does indeed harm and help!” “How so?” “When God Almighty took the Covenant from the descendants of Adam, He committed it to writing and embedded the document in this stone; it will therefore bear witness for the believer as to his fulfillment, and against the unbeliever as to his repudiation.”

This, they say is the significance of the words people utter when touching the Black Stone:

“O God, I declare my belief in You, my acceptance of Your document and my fulfillment of Your Covenant.”

Al-Hasan al-Basri is reported as saying: “One day of fasting in Makkah is worth a hundred thousand days, one penny in alms is worth a thousand pounds, and any other good deed is likewise worth a hundred thousand times its value elsewhere.” It is said that to circumambulate seven times is equal to one Visitation, and that three Visitations are equal to one Pilgrimage. According to authentic Tradition: “A Visitation in Ramadan is like performing a Pilgrimage with me.”

The Prophet said: “I shall be the first for whom the earth will split open, then I shall go to the cemetery called al-Baqi (*in Madinah*) and its occupants will be gathered up with me, then I shall go to the people of Makkah and I shall be resurrected between the Two Sanctuaries.”

According to another Tradition: “When Adam had performed all the rites of Pilgrimage he was met by the angels who said: ‘Blessed be your Pilgrimage Adam. We made Pilgrimage to this House two thousand years before you did’.”

We have it from an early source that God Almighty surveys the people of the earth every night; the first at whom He looks are the people of the Sanctuary (*Makkah*) and of these He looks first at the people of the Sacred Mosque; those He sees circuiting it He forgives, those He sees at

Prayer He forgives, and those He sees standing facing the Ka'bah He forgives.

One of the saints saw a vision and said: "I saw all the frontier regions prostrating toward Abbadan and I saw *Abbadan* prostrating towards *Jiddah*." It is said that the sun never sets on a day, nor rises after a night, when a saintly or holy person has not made the circuit of the House, and that when this ceases to be so there will be cause for the Ka'bah to be removed from the earth without trace. This will happen when nobody has come on Pilgrimage for seven years. The Qur'an will then be removed from the written books, leaving pages blank with not one letter showing. Then the Qur'an will be erased from all hearts, not one word of it will be remembered. People will then revert to the poems, songs and fables of the time of ignorance. Then will emerge the Antichrist and Jesus will come down to kill him. The Hour of Resurrection will be at that moment as it were a pregnant woman on the verge of giving birth.

According to Tradition: "Make frequent circumambulation of this House, before it is taken up; for twice it has been laid waste and the third time it will be taken away." It is related on the authority of Ali that the Prophet said: God Almighty says: 'If I wished to destroy the world I would begin by destroying My House, then I would destroy the whole world in its wake'."

The Merit and Demerit of Residing in Makkah May God Almighty protect her

Cautiously apprehensive scholars find fault with permanent residence in Makkah on three grounds:

One, fear of boredom and over familiarity with the House, for this may tend to douse the ardour of reverence in the heart.

That is why Umar used to beat the people who had completed their Pilgrimage, crying: "Yemenis, back to Yemen! Syrians, back to Syria! Iraqis, back to Iraq! For the same reason Umar was careful to prevent people from excessive circumambulation saying: ""I am afraid people will

get too familiar with this House.”

Two, nostalgia stimulates a yearning to return. God Almighty has made the House a concourse secure for mankind i.e. a place where they should congregate, returning to it time and again and never ceasing to aspire to it.

Someone said: “That you should be in another town, with your heart yearning for Makkah, attached to this House, is better for you than being there, bored with long residence and hankering after another town.” As one of the elders said: “Many a man in Khurasan is closer to this House than those circuiting it!” It is even said that God Almighty has servants so close to Him that the Ka’bah revolves around them.

Three, fear of committing errors and sins there. That is a grave peril, likely to excite the anger of God Almighty, on account of the nobility of the place.

Wuhayb ibn al-Ward, the Makkan, is reported as saying: “One night as I was praying by the Black Stone, I heard a conversation between the Ka’bah and its coverings, in which it said: ‘To God I complain, and then to you, Gabriel, of what the circumambulants fling around me; the thoughts they give vent to, their vanities and their prattling. Unless they desist I shall surely give myself a mighty shake, sending every stone I am built with back to the hills from where they were hewn!’ ”

Ibn Mas’ud said: In no city but Makkah is a man chastised for his mere intention, before he has acted upon it.” Then he recited the words of God:

“...whoever purposes to violate it wrongfully, We shall cause him to taste a painful chastisement.” (Surah 22 verse 25)

That is to say, punishment is entailed by the mere purpose. It is said that evil deeds are compounded in Makkah, as are good deeds. Ibn Abbas used to say: “Monopolistic hoarding in Makkah constitutes violation of the Sanctuary.” Some say the same of lying. Ibn Abbas said: “To sin seventy times at al-Rakiyah would be preferable to me than to commit a sin-

gle sin in Makkah.” Such fear has even led certain residents of Makkah to make a practice of leaving their confines of the Sanctuary whenever they need to answer the call of nature. Someone stayed there a whole month without ever reclining on the ground. As a deterrent to long residence, certain scholars have expressed disapproval of renting houses in Makkah.

Let it not be supposed that the demerit of residence is at odds with the merit of the place itself. The reason behind the former is human frailty and inability to treat the place with due respect. When we declare it preferable to forsake residing there, we refer to residence associated with inadequacy and boredom. As for its being preferable to residence in all propriety; how utterly absurd! Of course, for when God’s Messenger came back to Makkah he approached the Ka’bah and said: “You are the best spot on God’s earth, Great and Glorious is He. If I had not had to leave you, I would never have left you.” Of course, for it is an act of worship just to look upon the House, and goods deeds performed there are compounded, as we have mentioned.

The Superiority of Madinah the Radiant over Other Towns

After Makkah itself, there is no place superior to Madinah, the City of the Messenger of God. Deeds performed there are also compounded. Said the Prophet: “One prayer in this Mosque of mine is better than a thousand prayers in any other Mosque, except the Sacred Mosque.” Likewise every good action in Madinah is worth a thousand. After the City of the Prophet comes the Holy Land of Jerusalem, where one prayer is equal to five hundred elsewhere, with the exception of the Sacred Mosque. Again, the same is true of other deeds. Ibn Abbas relates that the Prophet said: “One prayer in the Mosque of Madinah is worth ten thousand prayers, one prayers in al-Aqsa Mosque is worth a thousand, and one prayer in the Sacred Mosque is worth a hundred thousand.”

The Prophet said: “If anyone endures the rigours and austerity of (Madinah), I shall be an intercessor for him on the Day of Resurrection.” Also: “If someone is able to die in Madinah, let him die there, for no one

will die there without my being an intercessor for him on the Day of Resurrection.”

Aside from these three places, all other districts are on an equal footing, with the exception of the frontier regions, where it is extremely meritorious to take up station. The Prophet said: “Only these three Mosques deserve a special journey; the Sacred Mosque, my Mosque and the Mosque of al-Aqsa.”

The Messenger of God also said: “All countries are the countries of God Almighty, so take up residence in any place where you find good company, and give praise to God Almighty.”

Chapter Two

Fine Points of Propriety: Internal Conduct

The Fine Points of propriety are ten in number:

Purity of Intention and Means

1. The Pilgrim should meet his expenses by lawful (Halal) means and should have his hands free of any worrisome and distracting business concerns, so that his attention may be devoted exclusively to God Almighty, and his heart directed in tranquility to the remembrance of God and the veneration of His holy rites.

According to a Tradition handed down by relatives of the Prophet: “At the end of the age, four classes of people will go on Pilgrimage; their rulers for the outing; their rich men for their trade; their poor men for the begging; their Qur’an readers for the benefit of their reputations.”

This indicates that all conceivable worldly purposes have some connection with the Pilgrimage. All of this negates the virtue of the Pilgrimage and depersonalises it, especially when the Pilgrimage itself is directly exploited by one who makes it on behalf of another in exchange for payment, seeking worldly gain by the work of the Hereafter. Pious and spiritual people disapprove of this, except where the intention of the person accepting payment is to settle in Makkah and he lacks the means to get there; in that case there is no harm in it, the purpose being to use worldly means for religious ends and not vice-versa. In this instance his object must be to visit the House of God Almighty, while at the same time helping his Muslim brother be relieving him of his religious obligation. Revelant in this connection is the saying of the Messenger of God: “God, Glorified is He, admits three to Paradise for a single Pilgrimage; the testator who bequeaths it; the one who carries it out; and the one who performs it on behalf of his brother.”

I am not saying that it is unlawful to make Pilgrimage on behalf of

someone else, nor that one is forbidden to do so after having discharged one's personal obligation as a Muslim. It is better not to do so, however, and not to make it a livelihood and a business, for God Almighty, gives the world for religion, not religion for the world. According to the Tradition: "He who goes on a campaign in the cause of God Almighty, and he who takes a wage, is like the mother of Moses who suckled her child and took her wage." He who takes hire for the Pilgrimage is similarly comparable to the mother of Moses; there is no harm in his doing so, for he takes it in order to have the possibility of making the Pilgrimage and visiting the Holy Places. He does not go on Pilgrimage to get the hire, but the other way round, just as Moses' mother accepted payment to facilitate her suckling by concealing her condition.

Shunning Unlawful Taxes

2. The Pilgrim should not aid the enemies of God by paying tolls to those Makkan chiefs who bar the way to the Sacred Mosque, or Bedouin who lurk along the road. To pay these people is to encourage tyranny and to make it easy for them, for it is like giving them moral support. The Pilgrim should therefore devise some means of escape from such payment. If he is not capable of this, then according to some scholars (and it is not a bad opinion) it is better to turn back and abandon non-obligatory Pilgrimage rather than give assistance to tyrants, for this is a heretical innovation and acquiescence would tend to give it the force of custom. This form of taxation is degrading and humiliating to the Muslims.

There is no sense in saying: "I had to pay up under duress." If one had stayed at home or turned back one would not have had to pay a thing. Actually, a display of affluence sometimes provokes a lot of demands, whereas these would not arise if one dressed like the poor people; you may only have yourself to blame for putting yourself in a situation of duress.

Moderation in Expenditure

3. Liberality in provision and magnanimity in outlay and expenditure,

steering a course between stinginess and extravagance. I mean the lavish indulgence in exquisite food and drink, characteristic of the opulent. But heavy expense in giving generously is not extravagance, for there is no goodness in immoderation and no immoderation in goodness. Outlay on provision for the Pilgrimage is expenditure in the way of God, and every penny of it is worth seven hundred. Ibn Umar said: "Part of nobility consists in making generous provision for one's journey." He also used to say: "The most virtuous Pilgrim is he whose intention is most sincere, his expenditure most proper and his conviction most certain."

The Prophet said: "For the Pilgrimage that is blessed there is no reward but Paradise." When he was asked: "O Messenger of God, what makes a Pilgrimage blessed?" He replied: "Speaking well and feeding the poor."

Forsaking Evil Conduct

4. Forsaking indecency, immorality and wrangling, as spoken of in the Qur'an. Indecency is a general term, covering all nonsensical, foul and obscene language and including flirtation and dalliance with women as well as discussion of sexual intercourse and its preliminaries. Such talk excites the urge to unlawful intercourse, and incitement to what is forbidden is itself forbidden.

Immorality is another general term, covering all departures from obedience to God.

Wrangling is excessive quarreling and argument, causing ill-will, distracting from noble purpose and incompatible with good character. As Sufyan said: "Indecent behaviour vitiates one's Pilgrimage." The Messenger of God set decent speech on a par with providing food as a cause of blessedness in the Pilgrimage, and quarreling is incompatible with decent speech. One should therefore refrain from raising frequent objections against one's fellow traveler, the camels and one's other companions; rather should one take things gently, sheltering others beneath one's wing along the way to the House of God. Good conduct is essential, and

good conduct means putting up with painful things rather than trying to repel them. They say that the Arabic word for journey is 'safar' because it reveals (yusfiru'an) a person's character. That is why Umar asked someone who claimed to know a man: "Have you accompanied him on a journey that would show up his good qualities?" Since the answer was no, he told him: "The I do not think you can know him!"

Going on Foot

5. Those who are able should make the Pilgrimage on foot, for this is the most meritorious way. At his death, Abd Allah ibn Abbas bequeathed this advice to his sons: "My sons, go on foot when you make the Pilgrimage, because for every step the Pilgrim takes while walking he earns seven hundred of the bounties of the Sanctuary." When asked what these bounties were, he replied: "One good deed in the Sanctuary is rewarded a hundred thousand-fold."

Walking between the various Hajj rituals, and when going to and fro between Makkah, Arafat and Mina, is even more strongly recommended than on the road to Makkah. Going on foot, in conjunction with putting on the Ihram (entering the state of consecration) on leaving home, is said by some to constitute completion of Pilgrimage. Such was the construction put by Umar, Ali and Ibn Mas'ud, may God be pleased with them, on the words of God Almighty:

"And fulfill the Pilgrimage (Haj) and the Visitation (Umrah) for God..." (Surah 2 verse 196)

On the other hand, some scholars maintain that transport is better, in view of the outlay and provision involved and because it is less disturbing and painful and more conducive to a safe completion of the Pilgrimage.

This second opinion does not really contradict the first; one must consider which applies to a particular case. It is said that for one who can easily walk it is better to do so, whereas transport would be preferable if he were weak, and if going on foot might affect him badly and restrict

him in the performance of his duties. There is a parallel here with Fasting, which is better kept up even by the traveler and the invalid, unless it would cause weakness and bad temper.

A certain scholar was asked whether, in the Visitation (Umra) one should go on foot or spend a little money on hiring a donkey. He replied that if one is attached to the money, it is better to hire the donkey than to walk. But if walking is the more serious matter, as for the rich, then walking is to be preferred. There is something to be said for this view, which seems to make it a question of self-discipline. The best course of all, however, is to walk and spend the money on charity; this is more superior to spending it on hiring a donkey. But for those who are incapable of giving up both personal comfort and their money, the opinion cited above is not inappropriate.

Modesty and Simplicity of Transport

6. The Pilgrim should take a simple riding beast for transport, abstaining from being carried in a litter unless there is reason to fear that he could not ride the animal. There are two considerations here: (a) sparing the camel the pain of bearing a litter; (b) avoiding an air of ostentatious luxury, the Messenger of God made the Pilgrimage on a riding camel, with a worn saddle and tattered pad, the cost of it being four dirhams. He made the circumambulation on the camel, so that people could observe his comportment and conduct. The Prophet said: "Take your rituals from me."

They say these camel litters were an innovation introduced by Pilgrims over the protests of the scholars of the day. Sufyan al-Thawri reports his father as saying: "En route from Kufa to Qadisiya, bound for Pilgrimage, I caught up with traveling companions from many lands. All the Pilgrims I saw had beasts of burden, animals carrying luggage, and riding camels; among them I spotted no more than two litters." When Ibn Umar noticed the new styles and the litters introduced by the Pilgrims, he would say: "Few Pilgrims, many riders!" Then he would look at a poor man, shabbily dressed and mounted atop some sacks, and say: "This is the cream of the Pilgrims!"

Dress and Appearance

7. The Pilgrim should be suitably dressed, not over adorned nor inclined to things that excite vainglory and rivalry, thereby enrolling among the arrogant and the opulent and parting company with the weak, the poor and the righteous. For God's Messenger ordained suitable dress and banned indulgence and luxury, according to the Tradition of Fadala ibn Ubayd. As another Tradition puts it: "The Pilgrim is nothing if not suitably dressed." God Almighty said:

"... let them attend to their personal cleanliness..." (Surah 22 verse 29)

Their "personal cleanliness" is attended to by shaving, trimming the moustache and clipping the nails. Umar ibn al-Khattab wrote to the army commanders: "Be smooth and be rough!" i.e. wear worn out clothes and manage things roughly.

It has been said that the best Pilgrims are those from the Yemen, on account of their humble and gentle ways and because they follow the example set by the elders

Red is to be avoided, especially in attire, as is commonplace notoriety. It is related that God's Messenger was once on a journey when his Companions made a halt. As the camels were grazing, he noticed the red cloth on their humps. The Prophet said: "I see this colour red has got the better of you!" Said the Companions: "We therefore got up and removed the red cloth from their backs, until some of the camels bolted."

Kindness To Beasts of Burden

8. The Pilgrim must be kind to animals, taking care not to overload them. It is beyond their capacity to carry a litter, and sleeping in one of them imposes an intolerable weight. Pious people would not sleep on the back of an animal, unless they happened to doze off while riding. Nor would they stay mounted for long while the animal was kept standing. The Prophet said: "Do not treat the backs of your animals as chairs!"

It is recommended that one dismount both morning and evening to give one's beast a rest, following the Prophetic example and the precedent of the elders.

One of the elders used to take an animal on hire with the stipulation that he would not dismount. Having paid the full price of hire, he would then get off the beast in order to do it a kindness, one that would be counted among his good deeds and weighed in his scales of the balance, not that of the owner.

Whoever harms a dumb creature and overloads it will be called to account for this on the Day of Resurrection. As he was dying, Abul Darda said to a camel of his: "Camel, do not complain of me to your Lord, for I have never overloaded you."

In short, in every warm heart there lies a reward, so the right of the beast and the right of the hirer should both be respected; to dismount for a spell provides the animal with relief and pleases its hirer at the same time. A man once said to ibn al-Mubarak: "Carry this letter for me and deliver it." But he replied: "Let me first check with the camel-driver, for I have taken the animal on hire." Note how cautious he was even about taking with him a virtually weightless letter! This is the prudent approach to piety, for once a door is ajar it gradually opens wider.

Sacrificing Animals

9. The Pilgrim ought to shed the blood of a sacrificial animal, even if it is not strictly incumbent upon him to do so, endeavoring to find a fine fat creature for the purpose. If the offering is voluntary he should eat some of it, but not if it is an obligatory sacrifice. The words of God Almighty:

"Such...and whoever does his utmost in the offerings consecrated to God..." (Surah 22 verse 32)

Have been interpreted as referring to the choice of a fine fat sacrificial animal.

It is preferable to drive the offering in from the assembly point, provided this is not too inconvenient and troublesome. One should refuse to pay sales taxes, for three things get over priced and reprehensively taxed; offerings, sacrificial slaughtering and slaves to be emancipated, since the

best of these are the costliest and most precious to their owners.

According to Ibn Umar, Umar was going to sacrifice a Bactrian camel. He was offered a price of three hundred dinars, so he asked God's Messenger if he should sell it and use the money to buy several other animals, but he told him not to do that, saying: "No sacrifice it!"

The reason for this is that a little of what is excellent is better than much of what is inferior. Thirty beasts could have been purchased for three hundred dinars, which would have represented a lot of meat. But the meat is not the object. The object is to purify the soul, to cleanse it of stinginess and to adorn it with the beauty of reverence for God Almighty, for:

"It is not their flesh that reaches God, nor their blood, but that which reaches God is your piety..." (Surah 22 verse 37)

This devotion is shown by regard for excellence of quality in value, be the quantity great or small.

When the Messenger of God was asked what makes for a blessed Pilgrimage, he said "al-ajj wa-lthajj (clamour and torrent)." Clamour refers to the loud voice used in calling: "labbayk" (At Your service Lord!), while torrent refers to the flow of blood at the slaughter of a sacrifice. Aisha said: "No human action on the day of slaughter is dearer to God Almighty than the shedding of blood, for it will come on the Day of Resurrection with its horns and its hooves; the blood will fall to some point at which God Almighty will stop it reaching the ground. So rejoice with it!"

According to another Tradition: "There is a bounty for you in every hair of its hide, and every drop of blood counts as a good deed to be weighed in the balance, so be of good cheer!" The Prophet also said: "Seek the aid of your sacrificial offering, for they will be your mounts on the Day of Resurrection."

Equanimity

10. The Pilgrim should face with equanimity the expense he incurs to

provision himself and acquire as offering, as well as any financial or physical loss or mishap that may befall him, for that is one of the signs that his Pilgrimage is accepted. Misfortune on the way to Pilgrimage is equated with expenditure in the cause of God, every penny being worth seven hundred. It is comparable to the rigours encountered en route to the Jihad, so for every hardship endured and for every loss suffered there is recompense and nothing is lost in the sight of God Almighty.

One indication that a Pilgrimage has been accepted, they say, is when a Pilgrim abandons his sinful ways, exchanging his idle companions for righteous brothers, and forsaking haunts of frivolity and heedlessness in favour of gatherings for remembrance and vigilance.

Inner States at Various Stages of Hajj

The role of sincerity in intention. The way to respect the noble shrines, the manner in which to contemplate them and to reflect upon their mysteries and meanings, from the start of the Pilgrimage to the end

The Pilgrimage begins with understanding, by which I mean the understanding of its place in the religion. The subsequent steps are then; yearning for it; resolving upon it; severing the ties that keep one from it; acquiring the seamless garments to be worn during consecration (ihram); purchasing the necessary provisions; hiring transport; setting out from home; crossing the desert; consecration at the assembly point, with the cry of 'Labbayk' (at Your service Lord!); the entry into Makkah, and then the completion of all rites of Pilgrimage. Every one of these steps serves as reminder to the mindful, a lesson to the heedful, an exhortation to the faithful aspirant, an instruction and indication to the sagacious. Let us therefore signify their key points, so that when the door to them is opened and the reasons known, some of their mysteries may be revealed to every Pilgrim, sufficient to afford him tranquility of heart, inner purity and fullness of understanding.

Understanding

As for understanding it must be realised that there is no way of attaining to God Almighty except by divesting oneself of desires, abstaining from pleasures, confining oneself to necessities and devoting oneself exclusively to God in every movement and rest. It was for this reason that the ascetics of previous religions used to isolate themselves from the people, retiring to mountain caves and preferring solitude to the company of others, in quest of intimacy with God Almighty. For the sake of God, Great and Glorious is He, they forsook worldly pleasures and applied themselves to strenuous exertions in pursuit of the Hereafter. God commends them in His Book, where He says:

“...This is because there are among them men who are dedicated to learning, and men who renounce this worldly life, and they are not arrogant.” (Surah 5 verse 82)

But when all that had vanished, and the people had become interested only in chasing their desires, shunning exclusive devotion to God Almighty, and getting lax about it, then God sent His Messenger Mohammad to revive the Way of the Hereafter and to renew the method of traveling along it in accordance with the practice of God’s Envoys.

Members of the earlier religious communities asked God’s Messenger if the ways of the monks and anchorites were followed in his religion and he replied: “God has replaced them for us with the Jihad and the declarations of His supremacy on every elevated place.” (Alluding to the Pilgrimage.) When asked about the anchorites, the Messenger of God said: “They are the ones who Fast.”

So God Almighty has favoured this Community by making the Pilgrimage its form of monasticism and has honoured the Ka’bah, the Ancient House, by calling it His own. He has made it a goal for His servants consecrating its surround as a sanctuary for His House and for the glory of His cause. He has made Arafat as it were the pipe supplying water to the pool of His heavenly court. He has emphasized the dignity of

the place by declaring its game and its trees inviolate. He has modeled it on a royal court, the goal of visitors from every deep ravine and every distant scene, who who disheveled, dusty and humble to the Lord of the House, meekly submissive to His Majesty and might, (acknowledging, of course, that He is beyond being contained by any house or confined to any town) so that their homage and adoration may be more intense, their compliance and obedience more perfect. That is why they have been enjoined to perform there certain actions to which the soul does not readily conform, and the significance of which is not easily grasped by the mind, like the stoning of the pillars and the running back and forth several times between al-Safa and al-Marwa. The Pilgrim demonstrates through such actions the perfection of his homage and adoration.

The Zakat has the rational appeal of an intelligible humane purpose. Fasting breaks the hold of desire, which is the tool of God's enemy, and is conducive to worship because it dispels distraction. Bowing and prostrating in ritual prayer promote humility toward God Almighty, through actions symbolic of humility, and the soul enjoys intimacy in the veneration of God Almighty. In actions like running to and fro or throwing pebbles, on the other hand, there is no pleasure or satisfaction and nothing to suggest any rational significance. The sole inducement to perform them is therefore the command itself and the intention to comply with it inasmuch as it is an order that must be obeyed.

deflected from where its comfort lies; for if this was something readily comprehensible to the mind, there would be a natural inclination towards it. That inclination would then back up the command and provide an added incentive to act upon it, in which case it would hardly represent a perfect demonstration of homage and obedience. This is why God's Messenger singled out the Pilgrimage when he said: "Doubly at Your service, through a Pilgrimage in truth, devotion and homage!" He did not say that about ritual prayer or any other act of worship. If it were necessary to question the wisdom of God Almighty in linking our salvation to actions that run counter to natural inclination and that are subject to the control

of the Sacred Law, we would vacillate in the practice of obedience and following the dictates of submission. The performance of inexplicable duties is a form of devotion most effective in purifying the soul, and in deflecting it from its natural propensities into the habit of servitude. If you have grasped this, you will have understood that perplexity concerning these strange actions stems from inattention to the mysteries of devotions. This much will suffice, God willing, to impart an understanding of the essence of the Pilgrimage.

Yearning

As for yearning; this arises only after understanding and the realisation that the House is truly a House of God Almighty, that it is modeled on the royal court so that he who goes there goes as a visitor of God, and that he who goes to the House in this world deserves that his visit should not be in vain. He will be accorded the object of his visit at the time appointed for him, namely the vision of God's Noble Countenance in the abode of eternity. For the inadequate mortal eye we possess in this earthly abode is unfitted to receive vision of the Face of God Almighty, lacking the capacity to bear it or the equipment to take it in. But in the abode of the Hereafter, when it has been granted perpetuity and immunity to the causes of change and decay, it will be prepared for that vision and sight. Meanwhile, by taking oneself to the House and beholding it, one earns the right to meet the Lord of the House in accordance with the noble promise.

To be sure, the yearning to meet with God Almighty creates a longing for all that will lead to that meeting; for the lover craves everything in any way connected with his beloved. The House is connected with God Almighty, so this connection is surely enough in itself to make one yearn for it, quite apart from the wish to attain the abundant reward that is promised.

Resolve

As for resolve; the Pilgrim should be aware that by his resolve he is

purposing to leave his family and homeland behind, forsaking pleasures and desires as he sets out to visit the House of God Almighty. He should hold in high esteem both the House and the Lord of the House. He must know that he has resolved upon a matter of high consequence and an affair of great moment. Where great things are at stake, the risks are also greatest, He should make sure his resolve is purely for the sake of God, untarnished by hypocrisy and desire for fame. Let him be fully aware that only what is sincere in his intention and action will find acceptance, and that there is no offence more outrageous than to visit the House of God and His Sanctuary for ulterior motive. He should check with himself to verify his resolve; the verification is his sincerity, and his sincerity lies in shunning all taint of hypocrisy and desire for fame. Let him therefore be careful to replace what is unworthy with something better.

Severing Ties

As for severing ties; this means the rejection of all iniquities and sincere repentance to God for all acts of disobedience, for each iniquity is a tie, and every tie is like having a creditor with you, clinging to your collar. He cries: “Where are you heading for? Are you bound for the House of the King of kings, when you are neglecting His command here at home, belittling and ignoring it? Are you not ashamed to approach Him as a disobedient servant, since He will reject you and refuse you?” So if you hope to have your visit accepted you should carry out His commandments, cast off iniquities, repent to Him first of all for all acts of disobedience, and sever your heart’s connection from concern with what is behind you. You can then turn your face to Him, as you turn your visible face in the direction of His House. Unless you do this, you will get nothing from your journey except trouble and hardship at the outset and dismissal and rejection at the end.

The Pilgrim should sever all ties with his homeland, cutting himself off completely as if he were going into exile, never to return, He should also write down his will and testament for his children and family, for the traveler and his money are at risk unless protected by God Almighty.

While severing ties for the journey of Pilgrimage, one should also remember to be detached for the journey to the Hereafter, for that is soon to come. All that is suggested for this earthly journey is desirable in preparation of the other, which is to eternity and the ultimate return. One should therefore not be heedless of that final journey while getting ready for the Pilgrimage.

Provisions

As for provisions; these must be from a lawful source. If the Pilgrim feels himself impelled to take a lot, seeking enough to last him the whole journey without spoiling or going bad before he reaches his destination, let him remember that the journey to the Hereafter is a much longer one than this and that the provision for it is true piety. Apart from piety, whatever one supposes to be provision will be left behind when you die, leaving you in the lurch. It will no more keep than the fresh food that goes bad on the first leg of the journey, leaving one dismayed and helpless in the moment of need. Beware therefore, in case the deeds which make up your provision for the Hereafter do not go with you after death, but get spoiled instead by the taint of hypocrisy and the turbidity of remissness.

Transport

As for transport; when the Pilgrim procures a riding beast, he should give heartfelt thanks to God Almighty for putting animals at his disposal to relieve him of pain and hardship. At the same time he should call to mind the vehicle that will carry him to the abode of the Hereafter, namely his coffin, for the Pilgrimage presents a certain parallel to the final journey. He should therefore consider whether the journey he is about to make, riding his mount, will help to equip him for that other journey aboard that other vehicle. How close at hand it is! For all he knows, death may be so near that he will be riding the coffin before he has time to ride the camel. The coffin ride is a certainty, whereas there is doubt about whether one can secure all one's needs for this trip. So where is the point in making careful preparations to equip oneself with provisions and

transport for a doubtful journey, while neglecting the matter of one that is sure and certain?

Purchase of Ihram

As for the purchase of the two seamless garments of consecration; when buying his 'ihram' the Pilgrim should recall the shroud in which he will be wrapped for burial. When he nears the House of God Almighty, he will put on the two sheets, wearing one of them over one shoulder and the other as a sarong. While he may never finish his journey to the House of God, what is certain is that he must go to meet God Almighty, wrapped in the cloth of the shroud. He should therefore remember; just as he goes to meet the House of God Almighty, in unusual garb and attire, so after death he must go to meet God Almighty dressed in a different fashion from that of this world. And the Pilgrim garb is close to the other, being unstitched like the shroud.

Leaving Home

As for leaving home; the Pilgrim should know that he has now left hearth and home, bound for God Almighty on a journey unlike any worldly voyage. He should be conscious in his heart of what he wishes, where he is heading and Whom he intends to visit. He should be aware that he is wending his way toward the King of kings, along with a host of visitors who have been summoned and have answered the call, in whom a great longing has been awakened, who have been roused and have risen, who have severed connections and said farewell to relations, and who have set out for the House of God Almighty, which is splendid in majesty and lofty esteem. To encounter the House consoles them for not meeting its Lord, till they are granted their ultimate wish and rejoice in the contemplation of their Master.

The Pilgrim should also nourish in his heart the hope of attainment and of finding acceptance, not by virtue of his deeds in faring far from his family and property, but through trust in the bounty of God Almighty, and in hope of confirming His promise to those who wish to visit His House.

He should nurture the hope that if fate overtakes him en route and he does not arrive, he will meet God Almighty, coming to Him, since He says in the Glorious Qur'an:

“...whosoever goes out from his house migrating to God and His Messenger, then death overtakes him, his reward becomes due and sure with God...” (Surah 4 verse 100)

Crossing The Desert

As for crossing the desert to the assembly point, with all attendant hardships; the Pilgrim should there recall the crossing at death between this world and the assembly point on the Day of Resurrection, with the terrors and trials that intervene. The terror of highway robbers should remind him of the terror of the inquisition by Munkar and Nakir (two angels who question the dead in the grave); the savage beasts of the desert should make him think of the scorpions and worms of the tomb, with its vipers and serpents; his separation from his family and relatives should put him in mind of the desolation of the tomb, of its agony and solitude. Through all these terrors he should equip himself by word and deed for the horrors of the tomb.

Putting on Ihram and crying ‘Labbayk’

As for donning the garb of consecration and crying ‘Labbayk from the assembly point onwards: the Pilgrim should know that this signifies a response to the summons of God Almighty, therefore, to be accepted and dread being told: “No favour or fortune for you!” Oscillate between hope and fear; rid yourself of your power and strength, and rely on the grace and generosity of God Almighty. The moment of talbiya (calling ‘Labbayk’) is the real starting point; this is the critical instant. Sufyan ibn Uyayna said: “Ali, the son of al-Husayn once went on Pilgrimage. When he had put on his ihram and his camel was ready for him to ride, he suddenly turned pale and began to tremble. He shivered and quaked and could not utter ‘Labbayk’, and when they asked him what was wrong he said: “I dread being told: “No favour or fortune for you!” When he did

eventually cry ‘Labbayk’, he fainted and fell from his camel. This kept on happening to him until he had completed his Pilgrimage.”

Ahmad ibn Abil Hawari said: “I was with Abou Salayman al-Darani when he wished to enter the state of consecration. He did not utter ‘Labbayk’ until we had traveled a whole mile. He fell in a swoon, saying when he came round: “Ahmad! God Almighty, inspired to Moses: ‘Tell the wrongdoers among the Children of Israel to remember Me seldom, for I shall remember with a curse those of them who remember Me.’ Alas, Ahmad, I have heard that to those who make Pilgrimage on ill gotten gains, God says: ‘No favour or fortune for you, until you return what you have in hand.’ And we cannot be sure that this will not be said to us.”

On raising his voice at the assembly point with the cry of ‘Labbayk’, the Pilgrim should recall that he is responding to the summons of God Almighty, as He said:

“And proclaim the Pilgrimage among people...” (Surah 22 verse 27)

He should also recall that mankind will be summoned by the trumpet’s blast, gathered up from the tomb and crowded together at the site of the Resurrection, responding to the call of God, divided into the favoured and the abhorred, the accepted and the rejected, and oscillating initially between fear and hope; like the Pilgrims at the assembly point, when they do not know whether or not they will be enabled to complete the Pilgrimage and have it accepted.

Entering Makkah

As for entering Makkah; the Pilgrim should remember at this time that he has arrived safely at the Sanctuary of God. As he enters he should hope to be safe from the punishment of God and should dread not being worthy to approach Him, for in that case his entry into the Sanctuary would leave him frustrated and fit to be abhorred. At all times his hope should be uppermost, for God generosity is comprehensive, the Lord is Compassionate, the honour of the House is tremendous, the visitor’s right

is respected, and protection is secure for all who seek refuge.

Seeing the Ka'bah

As for setting eyes upon the House; at this moment the Pilgrim should be conscious in his heart of the majesty of the House, venerating it with such intensity that he seems to anticipate beholding the Lord of the House. He should hope that God will grant him the vision of His noble countenance, just as He has afforded him the sight of His mighty House. Thank God, Great and Glorious is, for bringing you to this high degree, and for including you in the company of those who reach Him. Remember at the same time how at the Resurrection people will stream towards Paradise, all hoping to enter there, and how they will be divided into those who are admitted and those who are turned away, just as the Pilgrims are divided into the accepted and the rejected. In all that you see, take care to recall the things of the Hereafter, for every aspect of the Pilgrimage reflects some aspect of the Hereafter.

Circumambulating the House (Tawaf)

As for the circumambulation of the House; realise that it is a ritual prayer. While making it, you should fill your heart with reverence, fear, hope and love. Know that in your circuit you resemble the angels near the Divine Presence, who ring the Throne and circle around it. Do not suppose the purpose to be your bodily circumambulation of the House. No, the true purpose is the circling by your heart in remembrance of the Lord of the House, till remembering begins with Him alone and ends with Him alone, just as the circumambulation starts from the House and ends at the House. Know that the noble circumambulation is the circling by the heart in the Divine presence, and that the House is the external symbol in the visible world for the unseen Divine court which lies in the invisible universe. This parallel is suggested by the correspondence between the Populous House (*al-bayt al-ma'mur*) in Heaven and the Ka'bah.

The heavenly circling of the angels is like the human circumambula-

tion of this House, but since most people are incapable of achieving that level of circumambulation, they have been commanded to imitate as best they can, with the promise that: “He who imitates a set of people is one of them.” Of those who are capable of that kind of circumambulation, it is said that the Ka’bah visits them and makes circuit around them; visionaries have seen this happen to certain intimates of God Almighty.

Standing at Multazam

As for clinging to the coverings of the *Ka’bah*, and pressing one’s breast against its wall (at the part called al-multazam): your intention in the latter should be to draw close in love and yearning to the House and the Lord of the House, seeking grace through the contact and hoping for immunity from the Fire, not in the House but in every part of your body. In clinging to the coverings of the Ka’bah, your intention should be earnestly to seek forgiveness and to beg for mercy, just as one who has sinned against another will cling to his clothes while imploring his pardon, demonstrating that he has no refuge or recourse except to his munificence and forgiveness and that he will not let go until he is granted pardon and the assurance of future protection.

Running Between Al-Safa and Al-Marwa (Sa’y)

As for running between al-Safa and al-Marwa in the courtyard of the House; this resembles the constant to-ing and fro-ing of a servant in a royal palace. The Pilgrim demonstrates devotion to duty and hopes to be viewed with compassion, just like one who enters the presence of a king and leaves without knowing whether the sovereign has decided to accept or reject him. He keeps going back across the courtyard time after time, hoping to receive mercy the second time if not the first. While going back and forth between al-Safa and al-Marwa, the Pilgrim should recall how he will oscillate between the two scales of the Balance at the site of the Resurrection. He should let al-Safa represent the scale of good deeds and al-Marwa the scale of bad deeds. Let him recall how he shall go from one of these to the other, seeing which is heavier or lighter, fluctuating between punishment and forgiveness.

Standing at Arafat

As for standing at Arafat; recall when you behold thronging crowds, hear the loud voices speaking in many tongues, and see the various groups following their Imams through the ritual observances, matching their actions to theirs, recall the site of the Resurrection; the gathering of the communities with their Prophets and leaders, each community following its Prophet, aspiring after his intercession, all wavering with equal uncertainty between rejection and acceptance. After that recollection, set your heart on supplication and entreaty to God, that you may be resurrected in the company of the mercifully successful; make certain your hope of being answered, for the place is noble and mercy reaches all creatures from the majesty of the Divine presence through the venerable hearts of the mainstays of the earth. The standing place is never devoid of a generation of the saintly and holy, nor a generation of the righteous and magnanimous. When their aspirations are joined, their hearts devoted exclusively to humble supplication and entreaty, their hands raised to God, their necks outstretched and their eyes turned heavenward, as they aspire of one accord in quest of mercy, do not suppose that He will disappoint their hopes, frustrate their endeavor or begrudge them an overwhelming mercy. That is why it is said that it is a most grievous sin to be present at Arafat and to imagine that God does not forgive one. It would seem that the conjugation of aspirations, and the strength derived from contiguity with the saintly and holy people assembled from all quarters of the earth, constitute the secret of the Pilgrimage and its ultimate purpose, for there is no way to obtain the mercy of God Almighty in such abundance as by the conjugation of aspiration and the simultaneous mutual support of all hearts.

Casting Pebbles (Ramy)

As for the casting of pebbles (at pillars representing the Devil); your purpose in this should be obedience to the Divine command, to demonstrate submissiveness and servitude and readiness to comply without any obvious rational or psychological justification.

It should also be one's intention to imitate Ibrahim, on him be peace, since it was in this place that Iblis, on him be the curse of God Almighty, appeared to him to insinuate doubt about his Pilgrimage or tempt him to disobey, whereupon God Almighty commanded him to throw stones at him to repel him and thwart his design. If it should occur to you to think: "Satan appeared to him and he actually saw him - that was why he stoned him - but the Devil is not showing himself to me," you must realise that this very notion comes from the Devil; it is he who has lodged it in your heart, to weaken your determination in casting stones, to make you imagine that it is a useless action, like some kind of game, so why should you bother with it? Therefore you must drive him from your soul by being earnest and brisk in stoning him, putting the Devil's nose out of joint.

You should be aware that, while outwardly casting pebbles at the pillar, you are really throwing them in the face of Satan and dealing him a mortal blow, for the only way to spite him is through your compliance with the command of God Almighty in simple deference to His order without psychological or intellectual justification.

Sacrificing Animals

As for the slaughter of the sacrificial offering; be aware that this is a means of drawing close to God Almighty by virtue of obedience, so make the sacrifice perfect and hope that for every part of it God will deliver part of you from the Fire. A promise to this effect has come down to us. The bigger the sacrificial animal and the more ample its parts, therefore, the more comprehensive your redemption from the Fire.

Visiting Madinah

As for the visit to Madinah; when your eyes alight on the city walls, remember that this is the town which God Almighty selected for His Prophet, that he made it the goal of his migration, that this was his home where he promulgated the binding decrees of his Lord Almighty, established his own exemplary precedents, strove against his foes and proclaimed his religion until God Almighty took him to Himself. It then

came to house his tomb, and the tombs of two of his aides who upheld the truth after him, may God be pleased with them.

Envisage, next, the footprints of God's Messenger, on him be peace, as he went about the city. Aware that his precious feet have trodden in every place where feet may tread, you must walk with dignity and caution. Recall how he used to walk about its streets, picturing to yourself his humility and his graceful gait. Think of the tremendous wisdom God Almighty entrusted to his heart, how He has exalted his memory along with His own, even linking remembrance of him to remembrance of Himself, and how He frustrated the work of those who showed him disrespect, if only by raising their voices above his. Reflect then on the great favour God bestowed on those who enjoyed his fellowship, and who were so fortunate as to see him in the flesh and to hear him speak. You should feel a great regret at having missed his companionship, and that of his Companions. Go on to recall how you have missed seeing him in the Hereafter. Perhaps you will see him, but only in remorse, prevented from being accepted by him because of your evil conduct, for as he said: "God will raise certain people to me and they will say: 'O Mohammad!' I shall say: 'Lord these are my Companions.' But He will say: 'You do not know what practices they introduced after you had left them.' Then I shall say: 'Let them be far removed from me'."

If you have ceased to respect his Sacred Law, be it only for one instant, you have no guarantee that you will not be debarred from him because of your deviation from his way. Great should be your hope, nonetheless, that God Almighty will not keep you from him after He has granted you faith and sent you forth from your homeland in order to visit him, not for purposes of trade or worldly gain, but purely from love of him and longing to behold his relics and the wall of his tomb. Since you embarked on this journey for that reason alone, having missed the opportunity of seeing him in the flesh, you surely deserve the compassionate regard of God Almighty.

On reaching the Mosque, you should recall that this is the site selected by God Almighty, for His Prophet and for the first and most virtuous of the Muslims. Remember that the laws decreed by God Almighty were first observed at this spot, and that the best of God's creatures, living or dead, have gathered here. Be most hopeful, therefore, that God Almighty, will mercifully bless your entrance, and make that entrance in all humility and veneration. How worthy is this place to inspire humility in the heart of every believer! As Abou Sulayman is reported to have said: "*Uways al-Qarani* went on Pilgrimage and entered Madinah. When he stood at the gate of the Mosque he was told: 'This is the tomb of the Prophet.' He fell in a faint, and when he revived he said: 'Send me away, for I cannot enjoy myself in a town where Mohammad lies buried!'"

Visiting God's Messenger

As for visiting God's Messenger you must stand before him in the manner we have described, visiting him in death as you would have visited him in life. Do not approach his tomb except as you would have approached his noble person if he had been alive. Just as you would have considered it respectful to refrain from touching or kissing his person, rather standing back and bowing before him, you should now act accordingly. Touching and kissing tombs is a custom of Christians and Jews. Realise that he is aware of your presence, of your standing there and of your visit; that he is receiving your greeting and benediction. Imagine his noble form as it lies in the tomb in front of you. Feel in your heart his tremendous dignity. For he is reported as saying that God Almighty has appointed to his tomb an angel who conveys to him the salutations of those members of his community who salute him.

This refers to those who are not actually present, so how about those who leave home and cross desert wastes from longing to meet him, content merely to behold his noble shrine since they have no possibility of witnessing his noble countenance? He said: "When someone blesses me once, God blesses him ten times." This refers to the reward for oral benediction, so how about the reward for coming in person to visit him?

Next, you should go to the pulpit of God's Messenger imagining you can see the Prophet ascending it. Picture to yourself his radiant appearance, as if he were there on the pulpit, surrounded by the Emigrants and Helpers as he urges them in his sermon to be obedient to God. Ask God Almighty not to part you from him at the Resurrection.

Conclusions

Such are the duties of the heart at all stages of the Pilgrimage. When all have been completed, your heart should be beset with sadness, anxiety and fear, for you do not know whether you have had your Pilgrimage accepted and been firmly placed in the company of the loved one, or had your Pilgrimage rejected and been included among the outcasts. The Pilgrim should discover this from his heart and its conduct. If he finds his heart extremely adverse to this world of delusion and inclined to that of intimacy with God Almighty, and if he finds its conduct to have been weighed with the balance of the Sacred Law, then he may count on acceptance, for God accepts only those He loves. To those He loves He extends His care and the marks of His affection, guarding them from the onslaught of His enemy Iblis, on him be the curse of God. If these things are apparent, they point to acceptance. Otherwise it would seem likely that the Pilgrim has nothing to show for his journey but trouble and toil. From that we seek refuge with God Almighty.

The Eighth Book

The Rules of Reading the Qur'an

Chapter One

The excellence of the Qur'an and the people of it, the blameworthiness of those who do not recite it

The Virtue of the Qur'an

The Prophet (peace and prayers be upon him) said: "The people of the Qur'an are the people of God and His chosen ones. " The Prophet also said: "The heart becomes rusted, as the iron rusts." It was asked "O Messenger of God, what polishes it?" So he said: "Reciting the Qur'an and the remembrance of death." The Prophet also said: "God High Exalted listens in admiration to the one who recites the Qur'an."

Ibn Masud said: "If you seek knowledge then read the Qur'an, because it contains the knowledge of the first and the last." Al Fadil ibn Ayad said: "The one whose memorises the Qur'an by heart is in need of no one, he does not need the rightly guided Caliphs nor those who came after them, but the people should turn to him in their need." Al Hasan said: "By God, without the Qur'an you will not be sufficed, but if you have it you will suffer no poverty."

The Qur'an is the concrete tangible Word of God.

The Qur'an identifies itself to us and tells us that God is its Author, as God tells us in Surah 55 verses 1 and 2:

"God the Merciful has taught the Qur'an."

No being can aspire to express God's Message as He has done, therefore no translation of the meaning of the Qur'an can ever achieve the perfection and degree of expression of the Arabic in which it was revealed. That is a task beyond human capability, therefore translations of the meaning of the Qur'an into any language should not be thought of as the Qur'an.

The Qur'an exists exactly as it was revealed in its original Arabic language 1417 years ago, and it will remain exactly the same for all time as God's final Message to all mankind. God says in the Qur'an in Surah 15 verse 9 :

“ We are the One Who has revealed the Qur'an,
and We will most surely preserve it.”

There are no versions of the Qur'an, a translation is merely an attempt to convey the meaning of the Qur'an, it is a choice of words, different translators may use different words in order to convey the same meaning, but this does not mean that these translations are versions, only the Arabic text is the Qur'an. God tells us in Surah 20 verse 113 :

“Thus We have revealed it an Arabic Qur'an.”

Chapter Two

The External Manners of the One Who Recites the Qur'an

These are ten:

1. The condition of the one who recites: He should be in a pure state, standing in a respectful and serene way, he may stand or sit, turning towards the Qibla with his head slightly inclined. He should not sit cross legged, nor reclining, nor in a haughty manner.
2. The portion which should be read: The reciters have different habits in the amount they recite, some recite more than others, among them are those who complete the Qur'an in one day and night, and others who recite twice a day, some recite three times a day, and some take one month to complete the Qur'an.
3. The method of dividing the Qur'an into parts: The one who completes the Qur'an once a week divides it into seven parts, as the Companions of the Prophet sectioned the Qur'an into parts. It was related that Uthman ibn Affan (may God be pleased with him) used to start the Qur'an on the night of al jummah (Friday) by reciting Chapter 'The Heifer' and recite until Chapter 'Al Maidah', and on Saturday night with Chapter 'The Cattle' until Chapter 'Hood'. On the night of Sunday from 'Yusuf' till 'Marium' and on Monday night from 'Ta Ha' until 'The Narratives'. On Tuesday night he would recite from Chapter 'The Spider' until Saad' and on Wednesday night from 'The Companies' to 'The Merciful', and on Thursday night he would complete the rest of the Qur'an.
4. In writing the Qur'an it is preferable to inscribe the Qur'an in a beautiful and clear script. Inserting the diacritics is important as they are not only decorative but they function to clarify the meaning of the words and prevent their incorrect pronunciation.
5. The recital: It is preferable for the Qur'an to be recited rather than sim-

ply read, as what is gained from reciting it is a deeper reflection upon the content. For this reason Umm Salamah (may God be pleased with her) described the Prophet's recital of the Qur'an saying: "It was a recital in which every letter was crystal clear."

6. Weeping: Weeping is preferable with the recital of the Qur'an. The Prophet said: "Recite the Qur'an and weep. If you do not weep then try to."
7. The due right of each verse should be observed: so if you recite a verse in which a sajdah (prostration) is mentioned then you should prostrate. Also if you hear a verse mentioning sajdah during a recital made by someone else, then you should prostrate, however, you should not prostrate unless you are in a pure state.
8. Before the recital: One should say "I seek refuge in God, the All Hearing, the All Knowing, from the accursed Satan, My Lord, I seek refuge in You from the prompting of the Satans- And I seek refuge in You my Lord from their presence." One should then read: 'I seek refuge in the Lord of Mankind' and the Surah of 'The Opening', and on completing his recitation he should say: "God Most Exalted has spoken the truth and His Messenger has conveyed that truth, Lord let us benefit from it and bless us in it, praise be to God, Lord of the Worlds and I beg the forgiveness of God, the Ever Living, the Everlasting."
9. Regarding the reciting aloud: There is no doubt one must recite the Qur'an aloud to the extent that one should hear oneself while reciting it. Reading is in fact the division of the letters into sounds.
10. Improving the reading and reciting it in undulating tones without drawing out the words excessively: This is the way of the Sunnah. The Prophet said: "Enhance the Qur'an with your voice," and he also said: "God does not permit anything as much as He permits the enhancement of the Qur'an with a beautiful voice."

Chapter Three

Inner States during Recital of the Qur'an

These are ten:

1. To comprehend the greatness and nobility of the Qur'an and the blessings and compassion of God to His creatures in sending down the Qur'an from His Throne of Majesty to the extent of enabling His creatures to comprehend it.
2. When the reciter begins his recital he must hold in his heart a feeling of awe towards whose word it is and be aware that it is not the word of any human, that he is reciting the very word of God, that it is the most honourable of recitations. God Almighty said: "Which none but the purified touch." (Surah 56 verse 79)
3. The reciter should be fully attentive and dedicated to what he is reciting, God Almighty has said "O Yahya take the Book with a firm resolve..." (Surah 19 verse 12). This means that the Qur'an should be taken seriously with complete intent. Taking it seriously means that you should not allow your thoughts to wander while reciting the Qur'an.
4. The reciter should reflect upon its meaning as he recites, and he should not think of other things while reading it. His hearing should be receptive only to the sound of his own voice reading the Qur'an. For this reason it was Sunnah that the Qur'an should be recited because its recital out loud permits the reflection in the inner self. Ali (may God be pleased with him) said: "There is no goodness in worship which is lacking in fiqh, nor in reciting without reflection."
5. Interpretation: The reciter should make clear every verse as it is intended, as the Qur'an contains mention of God Almighty and His Most Beautiful Names, His Commands and mention of the prophets and their circumstances as well as the circumstances of the unbelievers and how they were destroyed, together with mention of Heaven and Hell.

6. **Avoidance.** The reciter must avoid removing himself from the remembrance of God, When a man removes himself far from the remembrance of God Almighty he loses his sight and his heart's ability to perceive the truth and becomes closer to the falsehood which is an obstacle to understanding like a veil. The Prophet said: "If it were not for the Devil hovering around the hearts of the sons of Adam, they would have been able to see the Dominion of God Almighty." The meaning of the Qur'an is from the Dominion of God Almighty and whatever the human sense cannot encompass or see except by the light of faith, is from the Dominion of God High Exalted. The veils which prevent understanding are four:

First: If the intention is only to produce an attractive sound without comprehending the meaning.

Second: If the reciter imitates a way of recital he has heard and is bent on using it, and he becomes extreme in its use without questioning it.

Third: If he insists in committing sin out of arrogance, and runs by his lusts in order to gain the praise of the people. The cause for this is the darkness of the heart and its rust, it is like the grime on the mirror which prevents true reflection.

Fourth: If he has read an superficial interpretation of the Qur'an and he believes that there is no interpretation for the words of the Qur'an except what has been narrated by ibn Abbas or Mujahad and others, and any interpretation other than that is subject to his own opinion. You should know that whoever interprets Qur'an according to his own opinion has confirmed for himself a place in Hell Fire. This is also from the dangerous veils which occlude the heart.

7. **Definition:** The reciter should define himself to be what the Qur'an speaks of, so if he hears a bidding or a forbidding, he should deem that this is intended for himself. If he hears a promise or a threat he should deem likewise, and when he hears the stories of the people of yore and

the prophets he should take these as examples for his own behaviour.

8. Influence: The heart of the reciter should be influenced according to the various verses through his understanding of them. His heart should be moved to feel sorrow, fear and hope etc., as he reads.
9. Elation: The reciter should be elated when he hears the words of God Almighty. The levels of reciting are three: The least of them is that the worshiper thinks that he is reciting before God Almighty and standing before him, as if God is looking and listening to him. He should be in the state of invoking God humbly. The second: is that he certifies by his heart that God Almighty hears him and talks to him out of His mercy, so his standing is of shyness and gratitude, listening and understanding. The third: is that he sees in the words of God His speech, and in the words, the commands of God, so he does not look at himself, nor to what he reads, nor at what he might gain from it. He should make his thinking wholly to God, this is the level of those who are closest to God.
10. Renouncing. The reciter should renounce his influence or power and disregard himself. If he recites the verses of the promises and praising the righteous he should regard himself as such, but he should regard those as the ones certain in their faith and should be longing to be joined with them. If he recites the verses about the blameworthy and the hated rebellious sinners he should see himself as one of them, and should feel fear and hope.

Chapter Four

The Virtues of the Qur'an and its Interpretation by Opinion, not by Transmission

You may say we have exaggerated the matter in the previous chapter regarding the understanding of the mysteries of the Qur'an and that which the rightly guided people have discovered of its meanings, then how would this be preferable while the Prophet has said: "Whoever interprets the Qur'an according to his own opinion has confirmed for himself a place in Hell Fire."

The knowledgeable people have used the superficiality of some interpretations to slander the mystics who have misinterpreted the words of the Qur'an contrary to what was related according to ibn Abbas and all interpreters. They have concluded that this is atheism.

But if what the interpreters said was correct, so this would mean that to understand the Qur'an would be to merely memorise its interpretation. And if this was not correct what would be the meaning of the saying of the Prophet "Whoever interprets the Qur'an according to his own opinion has confirmed for himself a place in Hell Fire." Know that whoever asserts that there is no meaning for the Qur'an except what has been translated from the superficiality of its interpretation, that person is only speaking for himself, and he is correct in what he claims for himself.

But he is wrong in judging all people according to his limited understanding. The tradition of the Prophet and the sayings of his Companions indicate that there is in the meaning of the Qur'an a place for those who possess understanding. Ali (may God be pleased with him) said: "Except that God grants a servant understanding of the Qur'an." If it was not anything other than the transmitted interpretations so what would that understanding be?

As to the saying of the Prophet whoever interprets the Qur'an according to his own opinion is in Hell Fire, and he forbids the people from doing that. Also Abou Bakr has said: Which land would bear me and which

sky would shade me if I interpret the Qur'an according to my own opinion?

Other saying which are transmitted in the traditions and sayings of the Companions, regarding the prohibition of interpreting the Qur'an according to one's opinion, show that one should confine oneself to what is narrated and what is heard alone, leaving presumption and personal theory; or such commandments could mean something else.

If what is meant is that no one should interpret the Qur'an except as he hears it, this would not be correct, for the following reasons:

1. It should be heard from the Prophet and correctly sourced to him. This would not cover all of the Qur'an. But as to what ibn Abbas and ibn Masud have said, it should not be accepted, and should be classified as interpretation according to opinion, because they have not heard it from the Prophet, and so from other Companions.
2. The Companions and interpreters have differed in interpreting some verses, they have forwarded different interpretations, and to have heard all of it from the Prophet would have been impossible. If one was heard then what about the others? This shows evidently that each interpreter has interpreted the meaning according to what he has grasped from his own presumption.
3. The Prophet prayed to God for ibn Abbas, saying: "My Lord! Please make him a scholar in religion and teach him interpretation." If interpretation was only heard as in revelations, and preserved in the same manner, then what would be the point of the Prophet's prayer for ibn Abbas in particular.
4. God Almighty has said: "...those capable of assessing the matter would have dealt with it..." (Surah 4 verse 83) this proves that the knowledgeable people are capable of understanding.

It is known that presumption is beyond what is heard, so the assumption that interpretation depends on what is heard is void, it is possible for everyone to discover of the Qur'an according to his understanding and to the limit of his reason.

The prohibition is confined in two ways; first, that a man has an opinion about the matter, and that he is inclined to his lusts, so he interprets the Qur'an according to his opinion and his lusts and bends the meaning to suit his own purposes. He uses this at times to argue with regard to knowledge, such as the one who uses verses of the Qur'an to argue that his invention is right, while he knows that the meaning of the verses he cites do not relate to what he claims, but he wants to confuse his adversary.

At other times he argues out of ignorance, but if the verse is allegorical his understanding would incline towards the meaning which suits his purpose and favour the side which suits his opinion and lusts, thus he would interpret according to his opinion. This means that it is his opinion which led him to that interpretation, and had it not been for his opinion he would not have favoured that side.

At another time he might have a correct purpose and seek for it evidence from the Qur'an, and he recognises in it what he wants, such as the one who seeks forgiveness at the time of suhur (the predawn meal taken in Ramadan) so he uses the sayings of the Prophet: "Eat your suhur, surely in suhur is baraka (blessing)." Then he asserts that the eating of the meal before dawn means zikr (praising God) while he knows that what is meant is eating. Also like the one who has been calling to resist hard-heartedness, so he says: 'God Almighty has said: "Go to Pharaoh, truly he is a tyrant-"' (Surah 79 verse 18) and he points to his heart and says that the word Pharaoh means his heart.

The second way is that he rushes to the interpretation of the Qur'an according to the superficial meaning of the language without relating what is heard and transmitted with regard to interpretation of the Qur'an and some of its words. So whoever confines the superficiality of interpretation to discover meaning just because he has understood the Arabic language, will make many mistakes, and become one of those who interpret according to his opinion. Transmitting and hearing are necessities for interpretation to avoid mistakes then after that his understanding and discovery will be widened.

There are many arts to hearing, such as summarising by curtailing, as God Almighty said: "...And We gave to Thamood the she-camel as a clear Sign, but they did wrong against her..." (Surah 17 verse 59) The meaning of this is a clear sign which they wronged themselves against by killing it. The one who looks only at what appears superficially of the language thinks that it is meant that the she camel was able to see and not blind, and he would not realise what they have wronged themselves with. God Almighty has said: "...until the sun set behind the veil..." (Surah 38 verse 32)

The advance and the delay, God Almighty said: "And had it not been for a decree that preceded from your Lord, and an appointed term, it would have been passed upon them." (Surah 20 verse 129)

A word that had diverse meaning. Such as thing, companion, nation, spirit. God Almighty said: "God gives a parable, a servant possessed by his master, who has no power over anything (Surah 16 verse 75), what it meant from it is the bounty God has given him.

As for the word companion: God Almighty said: "And his companion shall say: "This witness with me is prepared"; * "Cast into Hell every ungrateful stubborn one-" (Surah 50 verses 23-24) this means the angel which is entrusted to guard over him. God Almighty also said: "His companion shall say: "Our Lord, I did not make him insolent, but he was himself in far error." (Surah 50 verse 27) This means the Satan.

The word nation: the word nation has eight meanings, the nation: the group, as God Almighty said: "...he found thereon a group of men watering their flocks..." (Surah 28 verse 23) the followers of the Prophets, as you say: "From the nation of Mohammad," and as righteous man is to be followed as an ideal, as God Almighty said: "Surely Ibrahim was a nation devoted to God." The nation: the creed, as God Almighty said: "We found our fathers following a way..." (Surah 43 verse 23). Nation: a period of time, as God Almighty said: "...until a stated time..." (Surah 11 verse 8) God Almighty also said: "...who remembered after a long time..." (Surah 12 verse 45)

The spirit, also has been mentioned in the Qur'an with various meanings. However anyone who thinks it is sufficient to understand the superficial meaning of the Arabic language to be able to interpret the Qur'an and he does not recognise the hearing and transmitting in these matters, is definitely among those who interpret Qur'an according to their own opinion.

The Ninth Book

On Invocations and Supplications

Chapter One

On The merit of invocations and their benefit

The merits of invocation are shown in the Qur'an, as God Almighty said:

Therefore remember Me, so that I may remember you...(Surah 2 verse 152)

Thabit al-Bonani said: "I know when my Lord, Glory be to Him, remembers me." The people were astounded and asked him: "How would you know that?" He replied: "When I remember God, He remembers me. God Almighty said:

"O you who believe remember God often. (Surah 33 verse 41), also Glory be to Him said:

"...when you hasten on from Arafat, then remember God at the sacred station (Muzdalifa east of Makkah) and remember God as He has guided you, surely before His guidance you were astray. (Surah 2 verse 198) God, Glory be to Him has said: "...So when you have fulfilled your ceremonies of Pilgrimage, let your remembrance of God be far greater than your remembrance of your fathers..." (Surah 2 verse 200)

The Prophet said: "God Almighty said: 'I am with My servant whenever he remembers Me, and when he utters remembrance of Me.'" Also the Prophet said: "The deed which most saves the son of Adam from the punishment of God, is his remembrance of God Almighty." They said: "O Messenger of God is it greater than to do Jihad for God's cause?" He replied: "It is indeed more than Jihad in God's cause, except that you strike with your sword until it breaks, then you strike it again, then strike with it until it breaks."

Al Fadil said: "We have been told that God said: 'My servant, praise Me one hour in the morning and one hour after the afternoon prayers, so I will suffice you between it.'"

Mo'az ibn Gabal said: "The dwellers of Paradise will not regret anything except an hour in their life in which they forgot to praise God Almighty."

Chapter Two

The merit of invoking blessing upon God's Messenger, peace and prayers upon him; his special virtue, peace and prayers upon him

God Almighty said:

“God and His angels send blessings on the Prophet, O you who believe you should also ask and send blessings and peace upon him.” (Surah 33 verse 56)

According to Tradition: The Prophet came one day, his face aglow with good tidings, and said: “Gabriel came to me and said: ‘It will surely please you to know Mohammad, that no member of your Community ever invokes a single blessing on you without my invoking upon him ten, and that no member of your Community ever salutes you with peace without my saluting him ten times’.”

The Prophet also said: “When anyone blesses me, the angels invoke the same blessings on him; so let him give and receive accordingly, whether little or much.” And he said: “The person most worthy of me is he who blesses me most often.”

The Messenger said: “It is the height of meanness in a believer for him to hear me mentioned and not to bless me.” He said: “Multiply benediction upon me on the day of Congregational Prayer (Friday).”

The Prophet said: “Ten good deeds are recorded in favour of any member of my Community who blesses me, and ten bad deeds are erased from his record.” And he said: “If anyone says, when he hears the call to prayer and the signal to begin prayer: ‘O God, Lord of this Perfect Call and steadfast prayer, bless Mohammad, Your servant and Messenger; grant him mediation, merit, exalted rank and intercession on the Day of Resurrection’, he is entitled to my intercession.”

The Messenger of God, peace and prayers be upon him, said: "If anyone blesses me in writing, the angels will not cease asking forgiveness for him as long as my name is in that book." He said "There are angels on earth who travel around to bring me salutation from my Community." And he said: "No one salutes me without God restoring my spirit to me so that I may return his salutation."

When they asked him: "O Messenger of God, how should we invoke blessings upon you?" He replied: "Say: 'O God bless Mohammad, Your servant, and his family and his wives and his offspring, as you have blessed Ibrahim and the family of Ibrahim. Bestow Your grace upon Mohammad, his wives and his offspring, as You have bestowed Your grace upon Ibrahim and the family of Ibrahim. You are indeed Praiseworthy and Glorious'."

It is related that, after the death of the Messenger of God, Umar ibn al-Khattab was heard weeping and saying:

"You are more to me than my father and mother, O Messenger of God! There was once a palm tree stump on which you used to stand when you addressed the people. But when the people grew in number, you adopted a pulpit to let them all hear you. The tree stump then mourned your separation, until you laid your hand upon it and it was reassured. Still greater right has your Community to pine for you now you have parted from them.

You are more to me than my father and mother, O Messenger of God! So great is your merit in His sight that He has equated obedience to you with obedience to Himself, for He said: "Whoever obeys the Messenger, then he has obeyed God'." (Surah 4 verse 80)

You are more to me than my father and mother, O Messenger of God! So great is your merit in His sight that He told you you were pardoned before He told you the offence, for He said: "God pardons you! When you granted them leave...(of absence from military duty)?" (Surah 9 verse 43)

You are more to me than my father and mother, O Messenger of God! So great is your merit in His sight that He sent you as the last of the Prophets, yet mentioned you among the first of them, for He said: 'And We took from the Prophets their covenants, and from you, and from Noah, and from Ibrahim,....' (Surah 33 verse 7).

You are more to me than my father and mother, O Messenger of God! So great is your merit in His sight that the people of Hell dearly wish they had obeyed you; as they suffer torment among its layers they say: "...Would that we had obeyed God and the Messenger." (Surah 33 verse 66)

You are more to me than my father and mother, O Messenger of God! While God gave Moses, son of Imran, a rock from which streams gushed forth, this is not more miraculous than when water welled from your fingers, God bless you.

You are more to me than my father and mother, O Messenger of God! It is true that God gave Solomon, son of David, 'the wind, its going was a month's journey, and its return was a month's journey.' (Surah 34 verse 12) Yet this was not so miraculous as Buraq, on which you ascended to the seventh heaven, then ended your night by performing the morning Prayer in the valley bed - God bless you."

You are more to me than my father and mother, O Messenger of God! God did indeed grant Jesus, the son of Mary the power to bring the dead to life. Yet this is no greater miracle than when the poisoned sheep spoke to you, even though it was roasted; for its leg said to you: 'Do not eat me! I am poisoned.'

You are more to me than my father and mother, O Messenger of God! Noah once cursed his people saying: 'My Lord, leave not even one of the unbelievers upon the earth-' (Surah 71 verse 26) Had you cursed us like that, we should have perished. Yet, though your back was trampled, your face bloodied and your teeth broken, you refused to say anything but good; your words were: 'O God, forgive my people, for they do not know.'

Your are more to me than my father and mother, O Messenger of God! Though your years were few and your life-span short, you were followed by many more than followed Noah, for all his great age and longevity. Many believed in you, but only a few believed along with him.

You are more to me than my father and mother, O Messenger of God! If you had sat with none but your peer, you would not have sat with us; if you had married only your equal, you would not have trusted us. And yet, by God, you did sit with us, marry among us and trust us. You dressed in wool; you rode the donkey and I rode behind you; you set your food on the ground, you licked your fingers in all humility - God bless you and give you peace.”

Someone said: “I used to write down Tradition, invoking blessings upon the Prophet, but not saluting him with peace. Then I saw the Prophet in a dream in which he said to me: ‘Do you not complete the benediction for me in your writing?’” Since then I have never written without invoking upon him both blessing and peace.”

Abul Hasan is reported as saying: “I saw the Prophet in a dream, and I said: ‘O Messenger of God, with what was al-Shafi’i rewarded on your behalf, for saying in his book, al-Risala; ‘And God bless Mohammad - as the mindful remember and the heedless forgot to mention?’” He said, God bless him and give him peace; ‘He was rewarded on my behalf with not having to face the Reckoning.’”

The Merit of Seeking Forgiveness

Istighfar

God Almighty says: “And those who when they commit an indecency or wrong themselves, remember God and pray for forgiveness for their sins...” (Surah 3 verse 135)

and:

“And whoever does evil or wrongs himself, then asks God for forgiveness, he shall find God All-Forgiving, All-Merciful.” (Surah 4 verse 110)

God Almighty says: “ Then celebrate the praise of your Lord, and seek His forgiveness, for He is ever Relenting.” (Surah 110 verse 3)

God Almighty also says: “...those who implore God’s forgiveness in the predawn.” (Surah 3 verse 17)

The Messenger of God would often say: “O God, to You be all glory and praise! O God forgive me. Surely You are the Ever Relenting and Compassionate One.”

Other sayings of the Prophet:-

“To one who often seeks His forgiveness, God, Great and Glorious is He, grants relief from all troubles, a way out of all distress, and sustenance beyond his expectation.”

“I seek forgiveness of God Almighty, and turn to Him in repentance seventy times a day.” (Even though his past and future sins had been forgiven!)

“My heart becomes clouded unless I seek forgiveness of God Almighty, one hundred times a day.”

“Though your sins be as many as the flecks of foam on the sea, the grains of sand in the desert, the leaves on the trees or the days of the world, God will forgive them if you say three times at bedtime: ‘I seek forgiveness of the One Almighty God, the Ever-Living, the Self-

Subsisting, and I repent to Him.” (According to Tradition, this will obtain forgiveness even for one who deserts the ranks.)

Hudhayfa said: ‘I used to speak harshly to my family, so I said to God’s Messenger: “O Messenger of God, I fear that my tongue may lead me to Hell.” The Prophet replied: “How about seeking forgiveness? I beg God’s forgiveness a hundred times a day.”’

Aisha said: “God’s Messenger said to me: ‘If you have committed a sin, seek forgiveness of God and repent to Him. Repentance of sin means feeling remorse and seeking forgiveness.’”

God’s Messenger used to seek forgiveness with this Prayer: “O God, forgive me my mistakes, my ignorance, my extravagance and what You know better than I, O God, forgive me my frivolity and my over-earnestness my faults and wrongs intentions and all my shortcomings. O God, forgive me what I have done in the past and what I shall do in the future, what I have done in secret and what I have done in public, and what You know better than I. You are the Advancer and Delayer and over all things You have power.”

Ali said: “I am the sort of man who would benefit as much as God allowed from hearing a Tradition from God’s Messenger. When one of his Companions told me a Tradition, I would ask him to swear to its authenticity. I would trust him once he had sworn. Abou Bakr was always truthful. He once told me he had heard the Messenger of God say: ‘If someone commits a sin, but then takes a thorough ritual ablution, performs a prayer of two cycles and seeks forgiveness of God Almighty, his sin will be forgiven.’ Then Abou Bakr recited the verse: ‘And those who when they commit an indecency or wrong themselves, remember God and pray for forgiveness for their sins...’” (Surah 3 verse 135)

According the Abou Hurayra, the Prophet said: “When a believer commits a sin, a black spot forms on his heart. If he repents and mends his way and seeks forgiveness, the spot is purged from his heart. But if he goes on sinning, the spot will grow until it covers his heart all over.”

That is the rust which God Almighty mentions in His Book:

“No indeed! But their own deeds have rusted upon their hearts.”
(Surah 83 verse 14)

According to Abou Hurayra, the Prophet said: “God Almighty will raise His Servant to high rank in Paradise and he will say: ‘My Lord, how have I deserved this?’ Then God Almighty will say: ‘By virtue of your son’s prayer for forgiveness on your behalf.’”

According to Aisha, the Messenger of God said: “O God, make me one of those who rejoice when they have done a good deed, and who seek forgiveness when they have done something bad.”

The Messenger of God said: “When a man commits a sin and says: “O God forgive me!” God Almighty says: ‘My servant has committed a sin, but he knows he has a Lord who takes account of sin and forgives it. O My servant do what you want, for I have already forgiven you’.”

Other sayings of the Prophet :-

“A man who seeks forgiveness is not a persistent sinner, even if he lapses seventy times a day.”

“A man who has never done a good deeds looks toward heaven and says: ‘Surely I have a Lord, O Lord, forgive me!’ and God Almighty says: ‘I have already forgiven you’.”

“If a man commits a sin, but knows that God sees him, he will receive forgiveness even without asking for it.”

“If a man says: ‘Glory be to You! I have wronged myself and done something bad, so forgive me, for there is no one to forgive sins but You,’ his sins are forgiven, even if they are like a trail of ants.”

It is related that the best prayer for forgiveness is this: “O God, You are my Lord and I am Your servant. You created me. I am fulfilling my covenant and promise to You as best I can. I take refuge with You from the evil I have perpetrated. I acknowledge You as the source of my blessings, and I acknowledge my own responsibility for my sins. I have

wronged myself and I confess my sin, so forgive me my sins, those I have committed in the past and those I shall commit in the future. Surely no one forgives all sins but You.”

Other wise sayings:

Khalid ibn Ma’dan said: God Almighty says: “Dearest to Me of My servants are those who love one another for love of Me, whose hearts are bound to the Mosque, and who seek forgiveness at the break of day. When I wish to punish the rest of earth’s people, I shall remember them; I shall leave them alone and turn the punishment away from them.”

Qatada said: “The Qur’an shows you your sickness and your medicine. Your sickness is sin and your medicine is the prayer for forgiveness.”

Ali said: “It puzzles me that a man should perish when he possesses the means to save himself.” When they asked him to explain, he said: “The prayer for forgiveness!”

He also used to say: “God Almighty never inspires a man to seek forgiveness if He intends to punish him.”

Al-Fudayl said: “When a servant says: ‘I seek God’s forgiveness,’ the meaning of his words is: ‘Let my sins be few!’”

A certain scholar said: “Man is between sin and grace, nothing can improve matters except praising God and seeking His forgiveness.”

Al-Rabi ibn Khaytham said: “Beware of saying: ‘I seek God’s forgiveness and I repent to Him,’ for it is a sin and a lie if not acted upon. It is better to say: ‘O God forgive me and turn toward me.’”

Al-Fudayl said: “To seek forgiveness without feeling remorse is to mock God Almighty, without being aware of it.”

A Bedouin was heard to say, as he clung to the covering of the Ka’bah: “O God, I seek Your forgiveness, although I shamefully persist in sin. How could I stop begging Your forgiveness, when I know how generously You pardon? What loving kindness You bestow on me, when

You have no need of me at all! How often I offend and anger You, although I need You so badly! What a Lord - He fulfills all His promises, yet pardons when He threatens! Take my great sin into Your mighty pardon, O Most Compassionate of the compassionate!”

Abou Abd Allah al-Warraaq said: “Though your sins be as numerous as raindrops and the flecks of foam on the sea, they will be wiped away from you, God willing, if you offer this supplication to your Lord in all sincerity:

‘O God, I beg Your forgiveness for every sin, for I have lapsed again after turning to You in repentance. I seek Your forgiveness for all the promises I have made to You, but failed to carry out. I ask Your forgiveness for every action I intended to do for Your sake alone, but I mixed with something other than You. I seek Your forgiveness for every blessing You have bestowed on me, but that I used in disobedience of You. O Knower of the unseen and the seen, I beg Your forgiveness for every sin I have committed by the light of the day and in the darkness of night, in public and in solitude, in secret and for all to see. O Benevolent One!’”

Some say this is the prayer for forgiveness used by the Prophet Adam, on him be peace. According to others, it is the supplication of the Prophet Khidr, on him be peace.

The Tenth Book
On the Office of Portions
Chapter One
On the Merits of the Office of Portions,
its Rules and how Constancy in it
is the Path to God Almighty

Know that those who see by the light of faith know that there is no redemption in the encounter with God High Exalted, recognizing God, Glory be to Him. Love does not occur except in continuous remembrance of the Beloved One and constancy in it, and recognition does not come about except in continuous thought of His attributes and acts. Nothing exists except God Glory be to Him, and His acts. The continuity of remembrance and thought will not be constant except by renouncing the life and its desires, distancing yourself from it as much as possible according to necessity, and this will not be achieved except by spending the entire night and day in subjecting yourself to remembrance in thought of God, High Exalted.

Whoever wishes for his balance of good deeds to weigh heavily, then let him be pious and godfearing all the time.

Look at the directives God Almighty gave His Messenger and try to benefit from the light of the faith, as God Almighty said to His closest servant, and the most noble of them, the Prophet Mohammad: “Surely in the day you have long business. * But remember the Name of your Lord, and devote yourself to Him with all devotion.” (Surah 73 verses 7-8) And The High Exalted said: “And celebrate the Name of your Lord morning and evening; * And worship Him a part of the night, and glorify Him through the long hours of the night. (Surah 76 verses 25-26) And High Exalted said: “They forsake their beds as they call on their Lord in fear and hope...” (Surah 32 verse 16) And High Exalted said: “And those who

spend their nights prostrate to their Lord and standing;" (Surah 25 verse 64) And High Exalted said: "They slept not but a little of the night, * And before the dawn they would seek forgiveness." (Surah 51 verses 17-18)

The Number of Portions and their Order

Know that the portions of the day are seven, and between the dawn until the sunrise is one portion, and between sunrise until noon is two portions, and between noon until al asr (afternoon prayer) is two portions and between al asr until sunset is two portions.

The night is divided into four portions they are as follows, two portions from sunset until going to sleep, two portions in the second half of the night until the dawn.

Chapter Two

On the Excellence of the Night Vigil

Q'yam Al-Layl

Qur'anic verses:

The pertinent Qur'anic Verses are these words of God Almighty:

“Surely your Lord knows that you stand in prayer nearly two-thirds of the night, or half of the night, or a third of the night, and also a party of those with you...” (Surah 73 verse 20)

“Truly the rising by night is most potent for controlling the soul...” (Surah 73 verse 6)

“They forsake their beds as they call on their Lord in fear and hope...” (Surah 32 verse 16)

“Is he who worships devoutly in the night, prostrating himself and standing, fearing the Hereafter and seeking his Lord's Mercy?...” (Surah 39 verse 9)

“And those who spend their nights prostrate to their Lord and standing...” (Surah 25 verse 64)

“And seek help in patience and prayer...” (Surah 2 verse 45)

Traditions of the Prophet

Relevant Traditions include the following sayings of the Prophet: “While any one of you is sleeping. Satan ties three knots on the nape of your neck, and all night long he strikes the spot where each knot is tied, keeping you asleep. But if you wake up and remember God Almighty, one knot is undone; if you perform the ritual ablution, a second knot is untied; if you perform the prayer, the third knot is loosened and in the morning you will be fresh and in good spirits - otherwise the morning will find you bad tempered and slothful.”

(On hearing about a man who used to sleep all night right through till morning) “Satan has urinated in that man’s ear.”

“Satan has a kind of snuff, a kind of syrup and a kind of powder. When he gets a man to take this snuff, the man becomes badly behaved; when he administers the syrup, the man becomes sharp and evil-tongued; when he applies the powder, the man sleeps right through the night till morning.”

“Two cycles of prayer performed in the middle of the night are better for a man than the world and all it contains. But for the hardship it would have caused my Community, I would have made them compulsory.”

“There is an hour of the night when, if any Muslim asks God Almighty for something good, He is sure to grant it to him.” Or in another version: ...asks God Almighty, for something good of this world or of the Hereafter. And that is every night.”

According to Mughira ibn Sha’ba, the Messenger of God would get up to pray until his feet were splitting. Someone would say to him: “Surely God has forgiven you your former and latter sins?” But he replied: “Should I not be a grateful servant?” What is clearly implicit here is an allusion to increase in stature, for gratitude is the cause of augmentation. In the words of God Almighty:-

“If you are grateful I shall increase My favours upon you...” (Surah 14 verse 7)

The Prophet said: Abou Hurayra, do you wish to enjoy God’s mercy in life and in death, in the tomb and at the Resurrection? Then get up at night and pray! Do you wish for your Lord’s approval, Abou Hurayra? Then pray in the corners of your house; your house will be as radiant in heaven as the light of the planets and stars is to people on earth.”

The Prophet also said: “It is incumbent upon you to observe night vigil, for it was the practice of your righteous predecessors. Night vigil brings us close to God Almighty, He atones for our sins, drives disease from the body and puts a stop to transgression.”

The Prophet said: “Whenever a man is overtaken by sleep while performing prayer at night, the reward for his prayer is recorded in his favour and his sleep is reckoned as alms.”

The Messenger of God said to Abou Dharr: “If I were intending to make a journey, would I get provisions ready for it?” He said “Yes”, “Well, Abou Dharr, how about the journey on the way to the Hereafter? Shall I not tell you what will be useful to you on that day?” “Of course! You are more to me than my father and mother.” Fast on a very hot day, in preparation for the Day of Resurrection; perform two prayer cycles in the darkness of night, in readiness for the desolation of the tomb; make a pilgrimage, for portentous events; do an act of charity, by giving alms to a pauper, by speaking a word of truth, or by holding back a word of evil.”

It is related that in the time of the Prophet there was a man who, when others took to their beds and closed their eyes, would get up to pray and recite the Qur’an saying: “O Lord of the Fire, deliver me from it.” When this was mentioned to the Prophet, he said: “Notify me when this happens.” Then he came to him and he heard for himself. When morning came he said to him: “So and so, have you not asked God for Paradise?” But he replied: “Messenger of God, I am not there, nor do my deeds amount to that.” Shortly after this, Gabriel, on him be peace, descended and said: ‘Tell so and so that God has already delivered him from the Fire and admitted him to Paradise.’”

It is further related that Gabriel said: “Ibn Umar would be such a good man if only he would pray at night!” The Prophet informed him of this and from then on he always kept night vigil.

Nafi said: “Ibn Umar would pray through the night, then say: “Nafi, is it time for the predawn meal?” When I said “No,” he would resume his prayers. Then he would sit down and beg forgiveness of God Almighty, till the dawn broke.”

Ali ibn Abi Talib said: “Yahya the son of Zakariyah on both of them be peace, ate his fill of barley and went to sleep without reciting his de-

votions. When morning came, God Almighty said to him by inspiration: 'Yahya, have you found a dwelling better for you than My dwelling? Or have you found a neighbourhood better for you than My neighbourhood? By My might and majesty, Yahya, if you took one look at Paradise your fat would melt and your soul would expire from yearning, while if you took one look at Hell your fat would melt, you would weep pus after tears and wear leather after haircloth'."

The Messenger of God was told: "So and so prays during the night and in the morning he steals." He said: "His good action will cause him to desist."

The Prophet said: "God grants His mercy to a man who gets up in the night to pray, then wakes up his wife to pray also, sprinkling water on her face if she is unwilling." He also said: "God grants his mercy to a wife who gets up in the night to pray, then rouses her husband to pray also, sprinkling water on his face if he is unwilling." Further: "If a man wakes up at night and rouses his wife, and they both perform two cycles of prayer, they are recorded among the men and women who remember God very often."

The Prophet also said: "The best prayer after the five prescribed is the night vigil."

Umar ibn al-Khattab said: "The Prophet said: 'If someone misses his portion of Qur'an recitation, or part of it, through sleeping at night, then makes up his reading between the dawn and the midday prayers, it will be recorded in his favour as if he had done his reading at night'."

Traditions of the Companions and their Followers

Among the Traditions of the Companions, it is related that Umar would be going over the verse from his nightly recitation until he fainted and dropped, so then he would be visited because of this for several days as a sick man receives visits. When other's eyes were asleep, Ibn Mas'ud would get up and until morning a droning sound could be heard from him like the droning of bees. It is said that Sufyan al-Thawri ate his fill one

night saying: "When the donkey gets extra fodder, it works all the harder." Then he kept vigil that night through till the morning. When Ta'us reclined on his bed he would feel as restless as peas in a frying pan, so he would jump up and pray till morning. Then he would say: "The recollection of Hell sends the sleep of the worshipful flying!"

Said al-Hasan said: "We know of no harder act of piety than enduring through the night and offering up our money." He was then asked: "How is it that those who observe the Prayers of night vigil are among the people with the most beautiful faces?" To this he replied: "Because they commune with the All Merciful and He clothes them in light from His light."

A certain righteous man came home from his travels. His bed was laid out for him and he fell asleep on it, missing his recitations. He swore that never again would he sleep on a bed. Abd ibn Rawwad used to go to bed when night had fallen, saying as he stroked it with his hand: "You are soft indeed, but by God there is in Paradise a softer one than you!" Then he would spend the whole night in Prayer. Al-Fudayl said: I approach the night at the outset and the length of it appalls me; then I start on the Qur'an and it is already morning before I have satisfied my craving."

Al-Hasan said: "A man commits a sin and because of it he is deprived of night vigil." Al-Fudayl said: "If you are incapable of keeping night vigil and of fasting by day, you must know that you are under interdiction because of your many faults." Sila ibn Ashyam used to pray throughout the night. Shortly before dawn he would say: "My God, it is not for the likes of me to ask for Paradise, but deliver me by Your mercy from the Fire!" A man said to one of the wise: "I am really too weak to keep the night vigil." So the wise man told him: "My brother, do not disobey God Almighty, and you need not stay up at night."

Al-Hasan ibn Salih had a slave girl, whom he sold to some people. This slave girl got up in the middle of the night, crying: "People of the house, prayers, prayers!" They said: "Is it morning already? Has the dawn broken?" She said: "Do you mean to say you only observe the five

set prayers?” When they said yes, she went back to al-Hasan saying: “master, would you sell me to people who only observe the set prayers? Take me back!” So he took her back.

Al-Rabi said: “I spent many nights in the house of al-Shafi’i, and he never slept more than a very short part of the night.” Abul Juwayriya said: “I kept company with Abou Hanifah for six months and there was not one night in all that time when he laid his side to the ground.” Abou Hanifah used to stay awake half the night, but as he was passing some people he heard them say: “This man stays awake the whole night,’ so he retorted: “I am ashamed to be credited with something I do not do.” From then on he took to staying awake all night long. It is related too that he had no bedding for the night.

They say that Malik ibn Dinar spent the whole night through till morning repeating this verse:

“Or do those who commit evil deeds think that We shall make them equal to those who believe and do righteous deeds...” (Surah 45 verse 21)

Al Mughira ibn Habib said: “I noticed Malik ibn Dinar performing ab-lution after the late evening prayer, then he went and stood at his place of prayer. He took hold of his beard, and choking with tears, began to say: “My God, preserve Malik’s gray hairs from the Fire! You know the inhabitants of Paradise from the inhabitants of Hell Fire, so which of the two is Malik? He went on saying this till break of day. Malik ibn Dinar also said: “One night I went to sleep, forgetting my recitations. In my dreams I found myself with a most beautiful girl. In her hand she held a piece of paper and asked me: ‘Can you read well?’ When I told her I could, she handed me the paper, on which these lines were written:

Have pleasures and desires distracted you
from Paradise with maidens fair and sweet?
There you shall dwell eternally and sport
with all the lovely ladies you shall meet.

From dreams awake and - better far than sleep - recite Qur’an until the dawn you greet.”

It is said that when Masruq went on Pilgrimage he spent every night prostrating himself in worship. And it is related on the authority of Azhar ibn Mughith (one of those devoted to constant prayer) that he said: "I dreamt I saw a woman unlike earthly women, so I said to her: 'Who are you?' and she replied: 'One of the maidens of Paradise.' I then asked her to marry me and she said: 'Put your proposal to my master, and pay me my dower.' 'And what is your dower?' I asked. 'Long prayers of night vigil.' She replied."

Yusef ibn Mihran said: "I have heard that beneath the Throne there is an angel in the shape of a cock. Its talons are of pearl and its spurs of green topaz. When the first third of the night has passed it flaps its wings, crows and says: "Let those who get up arise!" When half the night is gone by it again flaps its wings, crows and says: "Let those who keep vigil arise!" The when two-thirds of the night have passed it once more flaps its wings, crows and says: "Let those who pray arise!" Finally when dawn breaks it flaps it wings, crows and says: "Let the heedless arise, bearing the weight of their sins!"

They say that Wahb ibn Munabbih al-Yamani never laid his side to the ground in thirty years, and that he used to say: "I would rather see a devil in my house than a pillow, for that is an invitation to sleep." He had a leather cushion, on which he would place his breast when sleep overpowered him. After nodding a few times he would then make haste to pray.

Someone said: "I saw the Lord of Glory in a dream and heard Him say: 'By My Glory and Majesty, I shall surely honour the abode of Sulayman al-Taymi, for he has prayed to me each morning for forty years without breaking his ablution made for late evening prayer.'" He is said to have held the view that when sleep penetrates the heart it invalidates the ritual ablution.

In one of the ancient scriptures, these words are attributed to God Almighty: "My servant who is truly My servant is he who does not wait for the cock to crow before he gets up."

***THE QUARTER OF
CUSTOMS***

The First Book

The Ethics of Eating

All Praise be to God, Who created the Universe, embellished its form and order, He created the heavens and the Earth, and He sent down water, then brought forth brought from it grain and plants, and determined the sustenance and bounty, He made food a source of energy for the animals and guided mankind to the way of righteous deeds and piety, and made the good food lawful for them, praise and peace be upon Mohammad, who He sent with distinguished miracles, and upon his family and his Companions.

To those who possess minds that they should make their hope of their encounter with God High Exalted, in the Abode of the Reward, there is no way for them to achieve their aim except in knowledge and righteous deeds, and that cannot be achieved without a healthy body. A healthy body can only be achieved if healthy food is taken in due proportion at the due time. With regard to this point one of the righteous predecessors has said: ‘Eating is of the religion, the Lord of the Worlds has instructed us regarding it, as He said: “...eat of the good things and do righteous deeds...”’ (Surah 23 verse 51) So whoever eats to enable himself to advance in knowledge and to work and to enable himself to carry out his religious duties, should not ignore his health nor should he eat excessively, as a animal grazes incessantly in the fields. The one who eats merely as the means of fulfilling his religious duties should behave in a way which reflects the light of the religion on himself. Religious manners and ordinances serve to give the servant the power to control his desire for eating and enable him to distance himself from sins. The Prophet, peace and prayers be upon him said: “Indeed a man will be rewarded even for the piece of bread he puts in his own mouth or that with which he feeds his wife.” This is only if he does this observing religious manners and duties.

We here will guide to the employment of religious duties in eating: its obligations, its ordinances, its manners and its merit, in four chapters and one additional chapter.

The First Chapter: Regarding what is necessary to be observed while eating even if one is eating alone.

The Second Chapter: Regarding additional manners to be observed when eating in a gathering.

The Third Chapter: Regarding what you present of food to guests.

The Fourth Chapter: Regarding invitations and hospitality and social occasions.

Chapter One

The Requisites of Eating Alone

In three Parts: The part before eating, the part during eating, and the part after eating

The First Part

On the manners in advance of eating; these are seven

The first: The food must be lawful and good and gained in a lawful way, and not gained through illegal, irreligious or unlawful ways. God High Exalted has commanded us to eat the good things which are lawful, and He has forbidden us from eating unlawful things; this is as a means of magnifying His blessings of the lawful and warning of the harm of the unlawful. He, High Exalted said: “O you who believe! Do not devour your wealth among yourselves falsely, but trade fairly by your mutual consent. And do not kill yourselves...” (Surah 4 Verse 29)

The Second: The Prophet said: “The ablution before eating dispels poverty and the ablution after eating purifies you from the minor sins.” This is because the hand which is used in work must be washed to make it clean for eating in the same way as one purifies oneself before prayer, as eating is a means of fulfilling the religious duties.

The Third: The food should be placed on a tray upon the floor, this is the way that the Prophet used to eat his food. The Prophet used to bring his food and put it on the floor as this was more modest and humble. It should be remembered that the food is a means for one to journey through life, which should remind one that he is on a journey traveling towards the Hereafter, and that the traveling to the Hereafter has needs: “...and take provision for the journey, but the best provision is piety...” (Surah 2 verse 197).

The Fourth: When being seated around the food one should develop

the habit of sitting in a good manner. While he sat eating, the Prophet frequently joined his knees and feet just as one who prays, except that one knee was over the other knee and one foot over the other foot, and said: "I am only a servant; I eat and sit as he does." Reclining while drinking is not good for the stomach and it is disliked to eat while laying on one's side or reclining.

The Fifth: The intention of eating should be to take provision for the purpose of fulfilling the religious duties, not just for enjoying the food for its own sake. Ibrahim ibn Sheban said: "For eighty years I have not eaten anything for the sake of my desire."

The Sixth: One should be content with whatever is available. One should not indulge in luxury food and one should not be excessive, one should not disdain from eating bread alone, and not seek to enrich the bread with some extra food or condiment. We have been commanded to respect the bread. Anything which keeps you alive and enables you to fulfill your religious duties is much blessed and we should not belittle it. If you have bread in your hand to eat and the call to prayer is given do not attend the prayer until you eat the bread if there is time. The Prophet said: "If the call for evening prayer is given while the supper is laid down, start your supper."

The Seventh: Endeavor to invite people to food even if they are from your wives and your children. The Prophet said: "Gather around your food, God will bless it for you." Anas said: "The Messenger of God never ate alone." The Prophet said: "The best food is the food upon which there is multiplicity of hands (i.e. partaking food with other people)."

The Second Part

On Manners During Eating

When the table is set it should be said: "In the Name of God, render the food favourable and praiseworthy and cause it to have the favour of Paradise." And if it is also said with every bite: 'In the Name of God,' it is better still, so that greed does not keep one away from the remembrance of God.

One should not eat very hot food, in regard to this the Prophet said: "It is without blessing; indeed God did not feed us fire, therefore cool it." One should eat whatever is within reach using the right hand and begin and end with salt. The Prophet said: "Eat from what is near you." One should take small bites and chew it well. One should not criticise the food, The Prophet never found fault with food. If he was pleased with it, he ate it, if he disliked it, he neglected it; if he discarded it, he did not render it hateful to another person. He disliked the lizard and the spleen but did not declare them forbidden. One should never turn a dish around so as to access the food on the other side, nor stretch your arm so to reach the food in the middle. The bread should be eaten from the outside edge inwards, not broken in two to reach the middle first. When the outside is finished then the middle can be broken and eaten. Bread should not be cut by a knife. Nor should the cooked meat be cut by a knife. The Prophet forbade the cutting of meat and bread by knives and said: "Bite it with your teeth." When the Prophet ate meat, he did not lean over it. Instead he lifted the meat to his mouth and then bit into it with his front teeth.

One should not put a loaf of bread into the soup or stew, except the piece which you will eat. The Prophet said: "Honour the bread, God High Exalted has sent it from the Blessings of Heaven." One should not wipe his hands with the bread, nor put pieces of rejected food back into the tray, but one should collect the scraps into one place so that no one

would mistakenly eat them. One should not drink while eating unless a piece of food becomes stuck in the throat as it is not medically beneficial to drink while eating.

As for drinking, the manner for it is to take the cup and say: "In the Name of God," and one should suck the water and not gulp it. The Prophet said: "Suck the water and do not gulp it, indeed the pain of the liver is caused by gulping." One should not drink standing or reclining.

One should watch the bottom of the cup in case it drips on him, and should look into the cup before drinking from it, and one should not breathe into the cup nor expel wind into it, but should remove it from his mouth saying "All Praise to God," and when returning it to his mouth he should say "In the Name of God." The cup should be passed around from the right.

The Third Part

On Manners after Eating

One should stop eating before feeling satiated by the food, then one should lick the fingers and then wipe them with a cloth, then wash them, one should pick up the crumbs. The Prophet said: "Whoever eats what has fallen from the tray lives in abundance and God saves his children from any harm." One should clean the teeth with toothpicks but not swallow what the toothpick removes, except what is removed by his tongue. But as for what one removes with the toothpick, it should be thrown away and one should wash his mouth after using the toothpick. The Prophet used to wipe clean his fingers saying: "The last portion of food is very much blessed." Moreover he licked his fingers until they became red. He did not wipe his hand with a towel until he had licked his fingers one by one, saying that he did not know in which morsel of food was the blessing. When he finished he said: "Praise be to God! God, You are worthy to be praised. You have fed, sated, given drink, and quenched thirst; praise belongs to You, Who cannot be denied, Who is eternally present, and Who is indispensable."

One should show thanks to God Almighty with his heart for what he has been fed and see that the food is a blessing from God. God High Exalted said: “Eat from the good of what has been bestowed on you and give thanks to God.” Whenever one eats lawfully one should say: “Praise be to God! God, You are worthy to be praised. You have fed, sated, given drink, and quenched thirst; praise belongs to You, Who cannot be denied, Who is eternally present, and Who is indispensable.” And if one eats something one is doubtful of one should say: “All Praise to God in any event. Please God do not make the food a strength for us to disobey You.” After the food one should read Surah ‘The Sincerity of Faith,’ and Surah ‘The Quraish.’ And one should not leave the tray before it has been removed, if one eats the food of another one should pray for him and say: “Please God increase him in good and bless for him what You have bestowed upon him, and ease to him the doing of good, and make him content with what You have granted him, and make him and us grateful to You.”

If someone breaks his fast with other people, he should say: “May your house always be open for the fasting people, and your food always be fed to the righteous, and the angels bless you always.”

It is preferable to say after the food: “All Praise be to God, the One Who has fed us and given us drink, He has sufficed us and sheltered us, He is our Lord and our Guardian, You are the One Who suffices everything. You have provided us with food lest we should go hungry, and with security lest we should live in fear. All Praise to You, You have given shelter to the orphans, and You have guided the misguided, You have enriched the poor, All Praise is always due to You. You alone do we worship, and You alone do we turn to for help, we seek refuge in You from committing any sin.”

Chapter Two

Additional manners to be observed when eating in a gathering; these are seven:

The First: One should not start the meal while in his presence there are those more deserving, such as elders and those of higher station, except to show them the way, then one should not keep them waiting especially if they are all gathered and ready to eat.

The Second: They should not keep silent while eating as this is the habit of the non Arabs, but they should speak in a well mannered way about the behaviour of the righteous people regarding food.

The Third: To be considerate to your companions regarding the tray in not taking more than the others, as this is unlawful, unless his companions are pleased to let him do that. The food is to be shared between all.

It is prohibited to swear an oath to force someone to eat. Al-Hasan ibn Ali (may God be pleased with them) said: "The food is lesser than to swear upon it."

The Fourth: They should not put their companions in a situation to ask him to eat. Some have said: "The best of those who eat are the ones who do not force their companions to watch him eating, and then burden them by asking them to eat." i.e. This means when the food is served one should eat without expecting repeated invitations.

The Fifth: They should wash their hands and if one is eating alone, one may spit out the water, but if there are people eating together one should not do that.

The Sixth: They should not stare at one another while eating, otherwise they will feel shy, and one should direct one's gaze away, and should not stop eating before one's guests, so that they would not be shy to continue. One should continue taking little by little until the guests have had enough.

The Seventh: One should not do anything which the others will be offended by, or regard as dirty, such as flicking one's hands over the food, or putting his face into the dish. One should not dip a large soft piece of bread into the dish, and the piece which he cuts with his teeth should not be dipped into the dish. One should not speak of dirty things when eating.

Chapter Three

The Manner of Presenting Food to Guests

There is great merit in presenting food to guests. Ghaffar ibn Mohamad (may God be pleased with them) said: “When you sit at the tray with guests, prolong the sitting, it is an hour which will not be counted from your age.” And al-Hasan (may God have mercy on him) Said: “Whatever a man spends on himself and his parents and other than them, will be charged for it, except what he spends on his guests in food, as God declines to ask him about it.”

From what was narrated regarding presenting food, the Prophet said: “The angels seek praise continuously for any of you as long as his tray of food remains before him until it is lifted away.”

Ali, (may God be pleased with him) said: “For myself to gather my brethren for a meal is more preferable to me than the setting free of a slave.” Ibn Umar (may God be pleased with them) used to say: “From the generosity of the person is that he has good provisions when he journeys and presents them to his companions.

As for the manner: On entering and on presenting food. It is not from the Sunnah to arrive unexpectedly and uninvited at a mealtime and to sit in wait for a meal. We have been forbidden to do this. God High Exalted, said: “Do not enter the house of the Prophet unless you have been invited for a meal, and do linger awaiting for a meal to be cooked...” This means do not arrive and wait for food to be cooked. It was narrated that whoever walks to a meal to which he was not invited, he walks in wickedness and has eaten unlawfully. But as for the manner of presenting food, one should not be excessive, if one does not have anything to present and he does not have the means, he should not borrow for that, as this will be a burden on him. And if he has something which he needs for his food, and he was not pleased to give it, then he should not present it. A person en-

tered upon an ascetic while he was eating, so he said: "If I did not borrow the price of it I would have fed it to you."

Al-Fadil used to say: "The people should boycott those who pose only for show, any of them invites his brother then he poses, so you should boycott him and never go back to him."

And of the burdens is that person presents all that he has, so he has been unfair to his children and hurt their hearts.

Salman said: "The Messenger of God has commanded us that we should not pose to our guests with what we do not have, and we should present to him what we have."

The second manner is for the visitor, he should not suggest or insist on a particular thing as this may cause difficulty to his host. If his brother gave him the choice between two kinds of food, then let him choose the least one. This is the Sunnah. It was narrated that whenever The Prophet was given the choice between two things he choose the least.

The third manner: the host should make his guest feel welcome and seek from him a suggestion, whenever he finds himself happy or pleased to do what is suggested, this is better and there is a reward and great merit in it.

The fourth manner: The host should not say to his guest, 'Would you like to eat?' But he should present the food if it is ready. Al Thawri said: "If a brother visits you do not say to him: "Will you eat?" or "Shall I present to you food?" But he should present the food, if he eats, it is well, if not, take it away."

Chapter Four

On the Manners of Hospitality

The manners of hospitality are six :

Firstly the invitation, then the response, then the arrival, then presenting the food, then eating and finally the departure.

The Invitation: The host should intend to invite only pious people, not the wicked or rebellious. The Prophet said: “The righteous should eat your food.” In his praise to some of those who had invited him, and he meant the poor people and not the rich in particular. The Prophet also said: “The worst food is the food of invitations to which only the rich people have been invited to the exclusion of the poor.” And one should not ignore his relatives in his hospitality, as ignoring them is equal to severing the womb relations. Also one should observe an equal preference between one’s friends and acquaintances, because if one is preferred over the other, the other other may be offended. One should not intend by means of his invitation it to be merely a means of posing, but it is better to gain the hearts of one’s brethren.

One should not invite the one who you know will find it difficult to attend, and if he attends he may be embarrassed by the presence of the others.

The Response has five manners:

The First, one should not prefer to respond to the rich in preference to the poor, this is a form of pride from which we are forbidden.

The Second, One should not decline an invitation merely on the grounds that the distance will be far for you, also one should not decline because the host is poor or not a notable person, but if it is any distance you can usually bear, you should not decline the invitation. It was said in the Torah or some other books: Walk for a mile to visit a sick person, walk two miles at a funeral, walk three miles in response to an invitation, walk four miles to visit a brother in faith.

The Third: One should not decline just because he is fasting, but he should attend, and if he feels that his brother is pleased to give him breakfast, he should have breakfast there and take into account in his intention that his breakfast is to please his brother. This should be for when one is fasting voluntarily. The Prophet said to the one who declines his brother's invitation on the excuse of fasting: "Your brother has bothered himself for you, then you come and tell him 'I am fasting.'"

The Fourth: One should decline an invitation if one is doubtful as to the goodness of the food, or the tray which is offered is not lawful, or if the place where the tray is set is furnished with velvet, or if the tray and plates are from silver, or a drawing of an animal was on the roof or a wall, or if one hears music or dance, or there is playing of musical instruments or jesting or playing games, or listening to backbiting or slander, or if there is forgery, deception or lies involved. All such things should deter you from responding and make such invitations forbidden. Also if the host is an oppressor or inventor or wicked or evil or a boaster who is looking to pride himself over the people one should not accept.

The Fifth: One should not intend by responding that you will attend only to enjoy the food, as this will be a striving for worldly pleasure, but one should have a good intention so that his response will be a striving for the Hereafter.

The manner of attendance is that you enter the house and you should not go to sit in the centre of the house, so that you have the best place, but you should be more humble, and do not arrive too late so that they would be troubled in waiting for you nor arrive before they are ready to receive. One should not crowd yourself upon other people already sitting, but if the host has directed you to sit somewhere you should accede, as he may have organized each one to a certain place, as if you disagree with him you may cause confusion.

You should not face the door of the women's quarters, and you should not look inquisitively at the place from which the food is served, as this will indicate your greed. And if the guest enters with the intention of

staying overnight, his host, upon his arrival, should indicate to him the direction of the Qibla, the bathroom and the place where he may wash to pray.

But as to presenting the food there are five manners:

The first is to speed the food, as this is a way of honouring the guest.

If the majority of the guests have arrived with the exception of one or two, and they are later than the set time, the right of those who are present is greater in hurrying with the food, than the right of those who are late, except when the one who is late is poor and his feelings would be hurt, then it is better to delay.

The second is to arrange the food, one should begin with the fruit, if there is any, this is more healthy for the digestion as it should reach the stomach before anything else. There is indication in the Qur'an regarding the presentation of the fruit first, as God Almighty said: "And such fruits as they shall prefer," (Surah 56 verse 20) Then said: "And flesh of fowl as they shall prefer," (Surah 56 verse 21). The best to be presented after the fruit is the meat and the breaded soup.

The third to be presented should be the various vegetable dishes, of them the best should be presented first, so that those who wish to eat of it can take their fill. The indulgent people usually present the heaviest dish first, then they serve the nicest in order to make the people eat too much. This is the opposite of the Sunnah, as it is a guile to make the people over indulge. It was a tradition of the people before to present all the dishes at the same time on the tray, so that each one can eat what he wishes. And even if the host had only one kind he would put it mentioning that is all he has so that they do not expect more. It was narrated that one of the pious people used to make a list of the food he had prepared and give each guest one so that they would know.

The fourth is that one should not rush to clear the tray away before the guests have had enough, in case one of them wants some more of a particular dish. If it is taken away the guest may be disappointed.

It was related that Al Satory, who was a lighthearted Sufi, once attended an invitation for a meal from a worldly person, a baby lamb was presented to them, the host was a miser who when he saw the guests tearing the lamb pieces he got enraged and said 'O (servant) boy, lift the tray away and take it inside to the children.' As the tray was being carried inside the house Al Satory got up and ran behind it, it was said to him where are you going? He said, 'to eat with the children.' The host felt embarrassed and ordered the tray to return to the guests.

For this reason the host should not finish eating before his guests have finished, and he should be last to finish otherwise his guests will be shy to continue.

The fifth one should present sufficient food as if there is insufficient the hospitality will be lacking, on the other hand if an excessive amount is presented then the host will appear showy.

As to the departure from the invitation there are three manners to be observed.

First the host must accompany his visitor to the door as it is Sunnah. The Prophet said: "It is from the Sunnah of the visitor that he should be accompanied to the door of the house."

Second the visitor should leave while he has a good feeling inside him even if he felt the hospitality had been lacking, as this is a mark of good character and humility.

Third the visitor should not leave the house except with the approval of his host, he should have regard for his hosts during his stay. If he was a guest he should not stay more than three days as he may be a burden on his host if he stays longer. The Prophet said: "The hospitality is three days, anything more than that is charity." If the host insists on the guest to stay longer and he feels he is sincere, then he can stay.

The Second Book

The Ethics of Marriage

Chapter One

Concerning Encouragement and Discouragement to Marriage

As in the Qur'an God Almighty said: "And marry those among you who are single..." (Surah 24 verse 32) and also God said: "...do not prevent them from remarrying their husbands..." (Surah 2 verse 232) and also in describing and praising the Messengers God Almighty has said: "And surely We have sent Messengers before you, and We assigned to them wives and offspring..." (Surah 13 verse 38) God Almighty mentions this here in showing His bounty and grace. God Glory be to Him has shown us how the righteous should give praise: "Our Lord, grant us wives and offspring who will be a joy to our eyes..." (Surah 25 verse 74)

As to tradition the Prophet said: "Marrying is my rite, so whoever turns away from my rite, then he has turned away from me." And he said: "Marriage is my rite, so whoever likes my nature let him follow my rite." And he also said: "Marry and multiply, because I will be proud of you on the Day of Judgment even in the miscarried fetus."

And he said: "Whoever abstains from marriage in fear of poverty is not one of us."

As to the sayings of the Companions, Umar (may God be pleased with him) said: "Nothing prevents one from marrying except for one who makes it impossible for himself or who is licentious." He has shown that Religion does not deter from marriage, and he limits the obstacles into two blameworthy matters. Ibn Abbas (may God be pleased with them) said: "The Piety of a pious person is not complete until he marries." He likens marriage to piety and the way of perfecting it. What is apparent is that he wants to safeguard his piety, from the temptations of desire, by marriage. Piety will not be completed except by the mind being at rest.

Ibn Masud (may God be pleased with him) said: "If there were only ten days left of my life, I would like to marry so that I would not meet God Almighty while I was unmarried."

The Advantages and Disadvantages of Marriage

There are five advantages in marriage:

The first advantage: The child, he is the object of marriage as the purpose of marriage is for the continuation of the human race, so that the world will not be depleted from humanity. Having a child is an act which brings one closer to God Almighty in four ways:-

Firstly it is the most precise way which is far from common understanding. It is the most powerful way for those who have vision to reflect upon the wonders of God's creation and His command of the universe. The explanation of that is that if the master has handed the servant the seeds and the tools of tillage, and readied for him a land for cultivation, and the servant is able to cultivate it and has appointed him to look after it, then if he was lazy and left the tools idle and left the seeds until there were rotten, then if the servant attempted to defend his laziness, he deserves to be blamed by his master and to have his anger directed at him. God Almighty has created the pair, male and female, then He incited upon them, whether male or female, the desire for each other and He created the small quantity of sperm and created in the female the womb and prepared it as a secure place for it and created the placenta to carry its nourishment. These acts and tools certify to the intention of their creator and call those who possess minds to know what they were prepared for.

Secondly, striving to gain the love and pleasure of the Messenger of God by multiplying the Muslims whose number will be the cause for his pride.

Thirdly, that there remains after him a righteous son who will pray for him as it was narrated in the Hadith: "All the deeds of the son of Adam will be cut except for three." It was mentioned that among the three is the righteous son.

Fourthly, that if the child dies before him, he will intercede for him. The Prophet said: "Whoever has three who died before reaching the age of puberty, God Almighty will admit him to Paradise by His mercy for their sake." It was said: "O Messenger of God, what about if they were two?" He said: "And also if they were two."

The Second Advantage: Is to be protected from the tempting of Satan and breaking the desire, to lower the gaze, to preserve the chastity, as the Prophet said: "Whoever has married has protected half his religion, so let him fear God in the other half." And he also said: "You should marry, and whoever is unable must fast, as fasting breaks the desire."

The Third Advantage: Is the companionship and enjoyment of each other's company, giving happiness to the hearts which will enable him to fulfill his worship, as the human soul, when it is bored, repels the truth, because it is against its nature. If it was obliged to continue with what it is opposed to, it will return back to falsehood. If it is amused by its pleasures from time to time, then it would be strengthened and active. In the company of women there is much rest and pleasure which would negate the toil and weariness of the life and gladden the heart. The soul of the pious must have amusement in lawful pleasure, that is why God Almighty has said: "God is the One Who fashioned you from one kind, and from that (kind) created his wife, that he might incline to her..." (Surah 7 verse 189).

Ali (may God be pleased with him) said: "Gladden your heart for an hour because if it is deprived it will become blind." In the tradition it was said: "A wise man should have three hours, one hour to remember God Almighty, one hour to bring himself to account, and one hour for his eating and drinking and and taking pleasure, as these three hours will sustain him for the remaining hours."

The Fourth Advantage: That his heart will not be occupied in running his house, domestic chores such as cooking, cleaning, furnishing, washing dishes preparing all the necessities of life, as if he was to take care of all this he would spend all his time and have no time left to gain

knowledge or to work. The righteous woman who takes care of her housekeeping assists her husband in the religion, the destabilization of these matters will occupy and disturb the mind and make disharmony in the life.

Abou Soliman Al Darani (may God have mercy upon him) said: “The righteous wife is not of this life, she spares her husband’s time for the Hereafter.”

The Fifth Advantage: Is in the disciplining of the soul, refining the character, and curing the sickness of the heart, and taking care of the rights of the wife and persevering in patience to tolerate any aggravation, to strive in reforming them and guiding them to the way of religion. To strive to gain the lawful for their sake and to care for the upbringing of the children, all these deeds are of great virtue.

As to the discouragements to marriage there are three:

Firstly: The major discouragement is the inability to seek the lawful. As this will not be easy for everyone, especially in these days when life is difficult. So marriage will be an increased burden and a cause to feed the family from unlawful means.

Secondly: Failing to give them their rights and to be impatient towards any aggravation. To be pleasant with women and to carry on with them according to their lusts is easier than seeking the lawful. In this there is great danger because he is the shepherd and he will be questioned about his responsibility. The Prophet said: “It is a great sin for a person to destroy his family by overlooking their errors and not correcting them.”

For this reason many people have renounced marriage saying that they are tested enough by themselves, so how could they add to that another soul.

Ibrahim ibn Adham said: “I would not delude a women by myself while I have no desire for them.” What he means by this is he is unable to provide for them. Thus Bishr has renounced marriage saying: “What

prevented me from marriage is His saying, Glory be to Him, “And women have rights equal to the obligations on them...” (Surah 2 verse 228).

Sufyan ibn Oyyenah (may God have mercy on him) was seen at the doors of the Sultan where it was said to him: “What are you doing here?” So he said: “Have you ever seen the one who has a family to support a successful man?”

Thirdly: It is other than the first and second; that the wife and child draw one away from the remembrance of God and lure him to the life of this world and its gains in order for him to provide a good standard of living for his children, so he needs to earn enough money for them, to save for their future, and to be proud of them. All things which draw you away from your remembrance of God Almighty, whether they are your wife, money or children, are ominous for the one who has them.

If you say: “Why then did Jesus renounce marriage in spite of its virtues?” If it was better to renounce it for the sake of worshiping God, then why did our Prophet Mohammad marry several wives?

Know that it is better to do both; to have more wives if you are fair between them and able to be equitable, and to worship God as nothing can keep you away from the remembrance of God. Our Prophet took the matter by his strength and did both marry and worship to his fullest extent, and in spite of his having nine wives nothing took him away from his worship of God Almighty.

The Prophet, in his nobility, worldly matter did not hinder his heart from being always with God, the Revelations used to come down to him while he was in his wife’s bed, so we should not make comparison between him and ourselves. But Jesus took the matter by firm resolve not by strength and decided to abstain from marriage, and maybe in his case marriage would have affected him differently, or would have been difficult for him to have done both, so he preferred to be fully in continuous worship.

They are the best to know of their circumstances and the conditions prevailing in their time in the way of lawful gain and the character of women, and what is expected of the husband and the requirements for marriage. Whatever the situation was marriage would have been better in some cases and renouncing it better in others. We are obliged to look at the acts of the Prophets without criticism under all circumstances.

Chapter Two

Concerning What is to be Observed at the Time of a Marriage Contract Regarding the Status of the Woman and the Conditions of the Marriage

The conditions and the pillars of the marriage contract which make the marriage lawful are four:-

1. The permission of the guardian, if there is no guardian then the Sultan.
2. The acceptance of the woman if she is deflowered and reached the age of puberty or virgin and reached the age of puberty if the one who is her guardian is other than her father or grandfather.
3. The presence of two just witnesses, if they are unjust, then it should be ruled that the marriage contract should be made out of necessity.
4. Full response and acceptance, in the fullest meaning of the word, al in-kah or al tazweeg (of marriage), or the given meaning in other languages, it should be uttered by those who have reached adulthood.

As for reasons in taking a bride, there are two categories; one is for lawfulness, the other for betterment and to achieve the purpose of marriage:

The first category, what is considered lawful is that she should be void of any condition prohibiting marriage. The prohibitions are nineteen:

1. She is already married.
2. She is in a period of prescribed waiting, due to widowhood or divorce.
3. She is renegade from the religion due to uttering words of pagancy.
4. She is a Zoastrian.
5. She is an idol worshiper or an atheist who does not believe in any prophet or book. Of these are those who believe in feminism and

permissiveness. Marriage to such is unlawful. Thus to every woman who believes in falsehood.

6. She is from the people of the book who believed in their religions after changing or after the sending of the Prophet.
7. She is a slave and the bridegroom is free and able to pay dowry for a free woman.
8. If she belongs to the one she will marry as one that is possessed by the right hand.
9. She is related to the bridegroom in origin or branches, or branches of first origin, or from first branches of each origin after origin. We mean here by origin, mothers and grandmothers, and by branches, children and grandchildren, and by branches of first origin, brothers and their children, and by first branches of each origin after origin, maternal and paternal aunts, other than their children.
10. She is a sister in suckling. And what is forbidden in the relatives of origin and branches is forbidden in the sister in suckling.
11. Prohibited by the relationship of marriage in that the one who wishes to marry has married her daughter or her grandmother or his father or his son has married her before him.
12. That she would be the fifth wife while he has still four other wives.
13. If the one who wishes to marry is already married to her sister or her maternal or paternal aunt, and the marriage would gather these together.
14. If the one who wishes to marry has divorced her three times already, then she will not be lawful to him unless she first marries another man and is then divorced from him and she waits the prescribed period.
15. The one who wishes to marry her has divorced her before by swearing an oath accusing her of adultery, or she accuses him likewise, she will be prohibited to him forever.

16. She is a ward on the pilgrimage (hijr or umrah) or the one who wishes to marry is the same, no marriage contract is permissible until they complete the pilgrimage.
17. If she is deflowered and under age, marriage is prohibited until she reaches the age of puberty.
18. If she is an orphan she cannot marry until she reaches the age of puberty.
19. If she is from the wives of the Prophet after him, or he has married her, they are the mothers of the believers.

The qualities of betterment of living which should be taken into account when enacting a contract to marry a woman and to achieve of the purpose of marriage are eight:

1. She should be righteous and pious. This is the most important attribute to look for.
2. She should be of good character as this is very important if you seek her assistance in strengthening your religion, because if she is loose tongued, badly behaved, ungrateful for any favour, her harm will be greater than her benefit.
3. She should be beautiful, this is also desirable as with it you will preserve your chastity. As for her nature, she should not be ugly, as much as she should be beautiful so her nature should be beautiful, as the two should go hand in hand. The Prophet said: "The best of your women is the one who if her husband looks at her she pleases him, and if he orders her to something she obeys, and if he is away she keeps him in herself and his wealth."
4. Her dowry should be reasonable. The Prophet said: "The best of the women are the beautiful in face and the least in dowry."
5. She should be fertile, so if she was known to be barren, she should not be sought in marriage. The Prophet said: "Marry the fertile and amicable." If she was not married and her condition was unknown, then watch for her health and youth as if she is healthy and young she will be fertile.

6. She should be virgin. The Prophet said to Gaber when he married a deflowered woman: "It would have been better if you had married a virgin, you would have enjoyed each other better."
7. She should be from a religious family of good origin, as she will bring up her daughters and sons, and if she is not of good upbringing she will not be able to bring up her children well. The Prophet said: "Stay away from the flower which grows in the sewerage." So they said: "And what is the flower which grows in the sewerage?" He said: "She is the beautiful woman of bad origin." He also said: "Choose carefully for your sperm, because bad traits are inherited."
8. She should not be from your close relatives as this diminishes the desire. The Prophet said: "Do not marry a close relative, as the child will be born weakly."

Chapter Three

The Ethics of Intimacy and the Requirements for the Continuity of Marriage

The first: The celebratory meal, it is preferable to hold one, Anas (may God be pleased with him) said: “The Messenger of God noticed the traces of henna on Abd El Rahman ibn Awf (may God be pleased with him), so he said: ‘What is this?’ He replied: ‘I married a woman and I gave her an ounce of gold as her dowry.’ So the Prophet said: ‘May God bless your marriage, you should have a celebratory meal even with only a sheep.’”

The Second: Dealing with wives in a good manner and tolerating their harm. Extend mercy towards them, God Almighty said: “...live with them in kindness...” (Surah 4 verse 19) and God Almighty also said regarding the importance of women's rights: “...and they have taken from you a firm covenant?” (Surah 4 verse 21). The last thing which the Prophet urged upon the Muslims concerned three matters, he spoke of these repeatedly until his voice was tired: “Prayer and what your right hand possesses, do not compel them to anything they cannot do. Fear God in your women! Do treat your women well and be kind to them, for they are your partners and committed helpers, remember that you have taken them as your wives and enjoyed their flesh only under God’s trust and with His permission.”

The Third: As well as tolerating their harm you should joke, exchange pleasantries and be lighthearted with them, because being lighthearted makes their hearts feel better, the Prophet used to joke with his wives and deal with them according to their mentality, he used to work with them in their houses, to the point that he was seen running a race with Aisha, which sometimes she won and sometimes he won, and he used to say one day for you and one day for me.

Umar (may God be pleased with him), in spite of his nature being

rough, said: "A man must be like a child with his wife, but if they seek what he has, then they should find him a man."

The Fourth: A man should not go too far in his joking and good manner with his wife and should not always condescend to her whims, because this will spoil her character and belittle him in her eyes. So he should take a middling course between the two. The Prophet said: "Miserable is the slave of the wife." He only said that because if a man obeys his wife's every whim then he is her slave.

The Arab women used to teach their daughters how to test their husbands, and the women used to say to her daughter: "Test your husband before you dare on him; pull out the iron tip of his spear, if he says nothing, then try to cut the meat on his shield, if he says nothing, then break a bone with his sword, if he says nothing, then put the saddle on his back and ride him, he is only your donkey." The heavens and the earth were created in justice, anything which exceeds its limit creates disharmony.

The Fifth: Moderation in Jealousy: A man should not be excessively jealous, and in matters whose outcome concerns him, he should not ignore them from their onset. He should not permit himself to go to extremes in suspicion, obstinacy or spying out the secrets of the heart. The Prophet forbade us from pursuing the faults of women.

The Prophet said: "There is one kind of jealousy which God Almighty loathes, that is the jealousy of a man for his wife without cause." Because of suspicion from which we have been forbidden, as most suspicion is sin.

As for jealousy with cause, it is unavoidable and praiseworthy.

The Sixth: Moderation in Expenditure: A man should not be excessively tightfisted or spend excessively for his wife, but he should be moderate. The most important thing to be observed in expenditure is that he feeds her from lawful sources and he should not make money unlawfully for her sake, as this will be a great sin against her rather than care of her.

The Seventh: The husband should be knowledgeable about the menses and its rules and circumstances, and he should teach his wife the regulations regarding prayer and what she should do during the menstrual period and after it.

The Eighth: If he has more than one wife, he should deal equitably between them, and he should not favour one over another, and if he has to travel and wishes one of them to accompany him, he should cast lots to choose between them, thus did the Prophet. So if one wife wins the lot and so takes the turn of another wife, whose turn it was, then the other wife must have her turn replaced upon their return from the journey, and this is an obligation upon the husband. The Prophet said: “Whoever has two wives, then he favours one over the other, on the Day of Judgment he will be brought out with one half of his body sideways.” He should be fair in what he gives them and in spending the nights with them. As for love, this does not come within the realm of choice. God Almighty said: “And you will never be able to be equitable between women even if you intend to...” (Surah 4 verse 129); this means you will never be able to be fair regarding the heart’s emotion.

The Ninth: The Violation of Marital Duties on the part of either Husband or Wife: Whatever discord there is between them which cannot be reconciled, if it was the man’s fault, or from their joint faults, the wife should not be incited against her husband, and if the problem cannot be resolved then two arbitrators should be appointed, one from her side and one from his side to examine the matter and to try to reconcile them. God Almighty said: “And if you fear disunity between them, then send an arbiter from his side and an arbiter from her side, if they wish for reconciliation God will effect harmony between them...” (Surah 4 verse 35). Umar (may God be pleased with him) sent an arbitrator between a wife and husband, and he returned without being able to effect a reconciliation. So he raised his stick ready to strike him saying: ‘God Almighty said: ‘If they wish for reconciliation God will effect harmony between them,’ So the arbitrator had to return with a good intention and treat them kindly until he reconciled them.

The Tenth: The Ethics of Marital Intercourse: The Prophet said: “If any on you when he approaches his wife says: ‘Please God distance the Satan from us and distance Satan from what You will bestow on us.’ Then God bestows on them a child, Satan will never be able to harm him.”

Let there be foreplay between them and before approaching each other they should begin by exchanging pleasant words and kisses. The Prophet said: “None of you should fall on top on his wife the way the animals fall on each other, but let there be between them a messenger.” They asked: “What is this messenger, O Prophet of God?” He said: “The kiss and the pleasant words.” Then if he finishes first he should wait for his wife until she has also finished.

The Eleventh: The Ethics of Partuition are five:

1. There should not be more rejoicing for a male child than for a female, because one does not know where the good lies.
2. One should make the call to prayer in the ear of the infant at birth. Rafi’a has narrated from his father: “I have seen the Prophet making the call to pray in the ear of Al Hasan when Fatimah (may God be pleased with her) gave birth to him.”
3. Call the child by a good name, this is the right of the child, even the miscarried fetus should be named.
4. Al Aqiqah: (to slaughter an animal) for the male, two lambs, and for the female one lamb.
5. To rub the roof of the child’s mouth with a date or something sweet.

The Twelfth: Divorce: Know that it is permissible but it is the most disliked of the permitted things in the sight of God Almighty. It is only permissible in order to avoid any harm or falsehood. God Almighty has said: “...if they return to obedience do not take punitive measures against them...” (Surah 4 verse 34) The husband must observe four conditions in divorce; *first* that he divorces her while she is in a state of purity; *second* that it is confined to one divorce and not to divorce three times at once,

because one divorce after the prescribed period of waiting, can permit him to return his wife to him during that period, and he can renew the marriage after the prescribed period.

Third, he should be kind and gentle and appreciate the circumstances during the divorce without being violent or oppressive, because that might make her feel what she would miss upon separation, and they might be guided to reconcile.

Fourth, he should not expose her secrets whether in divorce or during the marriage. As it was narrated regarding exposing the women's secrets, that it is a great threat, and it was narrated of one of the righteous people, that when he wanted to divorce a woman, he was asked what reason he had for divorcing her, he said: "The man of sound mind does not disclose his wife's secrets." So when he divorced her he was asked: "Why did you divorce her?" He replied: "I have no right to speak about the wife of someone else."

The Rights of the Husband over his Wife

Much evidence in the Tradition have been narrated concerning the importance of the husband's rights over his wife: The Prophet said: "Any woman who dies while her husband is pleased with her, she will be admitted to Paradise." And the Prophet said: "I have seen the Fire and I found most of its inhabitants are women." So they asked: "Why, O Messenger of God?" He said: "Because they curse too much and have been ungrateful to their husbands."

So it is his right that she should not give anything of his house except by his permission, but if she does so, the sin is on her, and the reward is for him. And of his rights is that she should not do any voluntary fasting except by his permission.

The rights of the husband upon his wife are numerous: the most important are two:

1. To keep him chaste and to cover his secrets.
2. The other is that she should not ask him for things which are unneces-

sary. To refrain from gaining anything unlawful. Thus were the habits of the women in the early days. When their husbands went out of their houses, the wives and daughters used to say: "Refrain from gaining any unlawful thing as we can bear hunger and pain but we cannot bear Hell Fire."

It is a duty of the wife not to squander his money or wealth but she should assiduously keep it.

The Ethics of Women

The woman should stay in her house and should not go in and out of her house excessively, she should not speak excessively to neighbours, and she should not enter their homes except on occasion, she should keep her husband in his absence and seek his pleasure in all her acts. She should not betray him in his wealth or in herself. She should not go out of her house except by his permission. She must not meet the friend of her husband for any cause, her interests should be in amending herself in her affairs, in running her house, establishing her prayer and fasting, and she should be content with what God Almighty has bestowed upon her husband. She should prefer her husband before herself, and before all her relatives, she should keep herself clean and ready at all times for her husband to enjoy her whenever he wishes. She should be kind to her children, keeping their secrets, refrain from insulting her children or arguing with her husband.

And of her ethics also, is that she should not be proud because of her beauty, nor should she despise her husband if he is ugly. It was narrated that Al Asmo'ai said: "I entered a scrub land and found a woman who had a most beautiful face married to a man who had the ugliest face, so I asked her: "O you, how did you accept to marry someone like him?" She said: "Hold your tongue, you have uttered a wrong thing, he may be best in what is between himself and his creator, so He made me a reward for him, or it may be that I am the worst in what is between myself and my creator, so He made him my punishment."

And from the ethics of the woman is that she should adhere to righteousness, and be sad in the absence of her husband, and to return to play and happiness and be the cause of enjoyment when he is present.

And what is due upon her of the rights of marriage is that if her husband dies she should not be very grieved for more than four months and ten. And she should refrain from beautifying herself during this period.

Of her ethics is that she should perform every duty in the house that she can do. It was narrated that Asma'a bint Abou Bakr Sadiq (may God be pleased with them) said: "Al Zubair married me and he does not have land or wealth and owns nothings except his horse and his baggage camel, so I was feeding his horse and fetching the supplies and brushing it, and I used to pound the date stones to feed the camel and water it and make the water skins, and I used to prepare the dough and carry on my head the date stones for long distances until Abou Bakr sent a servant for me, so she looked after the horse and I felt as if I was set free.

The Third Book

The Ethics of Earning a Livelihood

Chapter One

The Merits of Earning and Its Encouragement

In the Qur'an God Almighty said: "And We made the day for a livelihood." (Surah 78 verse 11) He mentions this to show His greatness to His servants.

And He High Exalted said: "We have established you on the earth, and provided you with sustenance, but you are seldom grateful." (Surah 7 verse 10) So your Lord has made it a bounty and He demands that you give thanks for it. "...and others are traveling through the land seeking God's bounty..." (Surah 73 verse 20) And High Exalted said: "...disperse in the land and seek God's bounty..." (Surah 62 verse 10)

As for Tradition, the Prophet said: "There are sins which nothing can obliterate except the determination to make a living." And peace and prayers be upon him said: "On the Day of Judgment the truthful trader will be gathered with the saints and martyrs."

It was told that Jesus (peace be upon him) saw a man and asked him: "What do you do for a living?" The man replied: "I worship God." Jesus asked him: "Who supports you?" He answered: "My brother." Jesus said: "Your brother worships more than you."

In the sayings of Luqman the wise, to his son: "O my son, the lawful earnings suffice you from poverty, when anyone is impoverished he is afflicted in three ways: he is weakened in religion, he is weak in his mind and he loses his sense of honour, and what is greater than these three is that the people disdain him."

Umar (may God be pleased with him) said: "None of you should slacken in seeking his bounty while saying 'Please God provide for me,'

while you know that the sky does not rain gold or silver.”

Umar (may God be pleased with him) saw Zayed ibn Maslamah sowing his land, so Umar said: “You have done the right thing, if you have no need of anyone it will be better for your religion and make you better than them.”

Ibrahim ibn Yasid ibn Al Aswad al Nakhayy who died in the year 96 H, was asked about the honest trader: “Is he preferable to you, or the one who spends all his time in worship?” He said: “The honest trader is preferable to me, because he is in jihad, Satan comes to him through the weighing and measuring and through his dealing, but he is striving against him.”

Ahmad was asked: “What would you say about the person who sits in his house or in the mosque and says, ‘I will do nothing until my provision comes to me.’?” Ahmad replied: “Such a person is ignorant. Has he not heard the saying of the Prophet: ‘God make my provision under the shadow of my spear,’ and he also related that when the bird was mentioned to him he said: ‘It goes out with an empty stomach and returns with a full stomach.’”

Chapter Two

The Science of Earning through Trade, Usury, As Salam (*i.e. sale in which price is paid for goods to be delivered later*) Rental, Loans and Partnership

First: Sales Contract

God has permitted trade, it has three pillars.

The First pillar: the parties to the contract, the trader is restrained from trading with any of the following four:-

An infant child; a mentally disordered person; a slave; the blind, this is because the underage child is not responsible nor the madman.

The Second pillar concerns the goods to be supplied under the contract; the ownership of the merchandise intended to be transferred from one party in the contract to the other, six conditions pertain to it:

Firstly, it should not be impure, it is not permitted to sell dogs or pigs.

Secondly, it should be of benefit, so it is not permitted to sell insects, rats or snakes.

But you may sell parrots, peacocks and all decorative birds, even if they are inedible, to enjoy the sight and sound of them is permissible, but the dog is a thing which cannot be kept in the house for amusement, because the Prophet has forbidden us from doing so.

Thirdly, the goods should belong to the contractor or he has permission from the owner to sell them.

Fourthly, the goods must be physical and available, whatever cannot be physically handed from one to another cannot be sold, such as fish in the sea, unborn cattle and the fleece upon the sheep, nor the milk in the udder. Anything which cannot be lawfully handed over, such as

mortgaged property or frozen assets cannot be sold.

Fifthly, the goods must be detailed and their kind and amount specified.

Sixthly, the sold goods must be exchanged for their price in money. If the goods were to be bartered in exchange for something else, this is a special case. The Prophet forbade the sale of something which is not fully paid for.

The Third pillar: The terms of the contract, there must be an offer and acceptance in clear understandable language, whether verbal or written.

Second: Usury Contract

God Almighty has prohibited usury, and financiers have been warned from dealing in it, and likewise those who deal in foodstuffs, as there is no usury except in money or food. The money dealer should beware if he wants to sell or exchange money for other money, it must be face to face and the exchange must take place in the same sitting. They should not exchange inferior quality for superior quality, as it is only permissible to deal in like quality. It is not permissible to buy a greater quantity of bad quality goods and pay for it with a lesser quantity of good quality goods. What is meant here is that you are allowed to sell gold for gold and silver for silver.

As to those who deal in foodstuffs who wish to barter their goods, the barter must be concluded in one sitting, whether the foods to be bartered are different kinds or not. But if they are from the same kind, then they should exchange them and observe the like quality.

Third: As Salam Contract (i.e. sale in which price is paid for goods to be delivered later)

The trader must observe ten conditions with regard to the As Salam Contract:

First: The value of the contract must be known so that the dealing does not exceed them, if the delivery is not made in due time the in-

jured party can return a claim against this value.

Second: The value should be verified as existing at the sitting before the parties leave.

Third: The goods to be sold must be specified, such as grain, livestock, metals, cotton or wool.

It is not permissible in the case of pastries or any substance of which its components can spoil.

Fourth: The description given must be checked and verified.

Fifth: The period of time must be specified, if it is to be a payment in arrears, it should not be delayed until harvest, nor cropping, but it must be specified in days and months.

Sixth: The goods to be sold must be delivered in a ready form for the store, secure and present.

Seventh: The place of delivery must be mentioned.

Eighth: The goods are not to be defined as originating from a specific place.

Ninth: The goods are not to be defined as being contained in specific container of a type which is impossible to find.

Tenth: It should not be delivered in food, even if the capital was food, nor be handed in cash even if the capital was cash.

Fourth: Rental Contract

There are two pillars: the rent and the benefit .

Rent is the value of money; it should be known and specified with all its conditions as in a contract for sale.

The second pillar: The benefit intended from the rental. There are five conditions pertaining to it:

First: There should be work or effort exerted for the rent.

Second: The rental should not be made for a use other than the prime use of what is rented, for example you cannot rent a cow to work and then milk it.

Third: The work should be physically and lawfully appropriate. A weak person should not be hired to do strenuous work he cannot do, nor can a mute be hired to teach in a school.

Fourth: Rental cannot be made for work which is an obligatory duty on a person, such as hiring a person to fast, pray or do jihad in one's place.

Fifth: The work and the benefit should be known. The dressmaker's work is apparent in the dress, the teacher's work is apparent in the lesson.

Fifth: Contract of Loan

There are three pillars:

First: The value of the loan, it should be ready cash paid to the borrower who is going to work with it.

Second: The profit should be declared to be a condition that he will gain a half or a third or whatever they agree.

Third: The work which the borrower will use the loan for must be a trade in which he is not restricted to one type of business or to a period of time. If it is a condition that he will purchase cattle with the money to obtain its young, then they will share the young, or they will buy wheat, then they will bake and share the profit, this will not be correct.

Sixth: Contract of Partnership

This falls into four types. Three of them are unlawful, according to the Al Shafi'i school of thought.

First: The negotiated company, that is when two partners say, we have negotiated to share in all what we have and what we owe and what is beneficial. This is unlawful.

Second: The partnership of labour. This is to agree together to share the wages of work. This is unlawful.

Third: The partnership for influence: This is to say that one partner has higher standing than the other and he will use it in order to propagate and increase their business in ways other than of work. This is also unlawful.

But what is correct is the fourth, which is called 'a joint partnership'. This is when their money is joined together to the point that you cannot distinguish what belongs to one from the other except by division, each one would permit the other to manage the company in equal power. They share profit and loss according to their mutual shares and this must be an irrevocable agreement.

The power of managing the company can be removed by dismissal, and by division the two parties can separate.

Chapter Three

An Exposition on Justice and Avoidance of Injustice in Dealing

First Part:

General Harm. Its various Forms:

The First: The monopoly, the seller of foodstuffs withhold stocks of food in anticipation of raising the price, this is to the general harm and the one who commits it is blameworthy according to the Shariah.

Ali (may God be pleased with him) said: “Whoever monopolises food for forty days, his heart is hardened.” And he also said: “The one who monopolises food will be burnt in the Fire.”

The Second: The one who circulates counterfeit money is unjust because he harms thereby the dealer who buys from him without knowing, and if he knows he will circulate it to the others, and thus the third and fourth and it will pass from hand to hand until the harm is general and the corruption has spread everywhere. So the sin of all of them goes back to the one who started it. The Prophet said: “Whoever originates a bad deed, then the people work with it after him, he will carry the sin of it and the like of all those who worked with it, and this will not diminish from them any of their sin.” Someone said: “Spending one forged dirhem is worse than stealing one hundred dirhems because theft is one sin which is committed in one action, but spending a forged coin is an invention against the religion and it is a bad deed which others will work with, so the sin of it will be upon him after his death for a hundred or two hundred years or more until that forged coin is no more.”

Second Part

Harm Specific to the Dealer

The overall rule is that he should not love for his brother except what he loves for himself, so whatever he dislikes to deal with for himself he should not deal with for the others.

The expounding of it is in four parts: the description of something good which is not in it or the concealing of something bad which is in it. The weight and the value of anything should not be concealed, nor should you conceal anything concerning the price, which if it were known to the dealer he would not have bought it.

The First: The description of the goods should not be overpraised because if it is not there it is a lie. If the buyer accepts this then it is injustice as well as a lie. If he does not accept then it is a lie and a loss of virtue.

The Second: He should reveal all defects in the goods whether apparent or not, and he should not conceal anything in it as this is an obligation, if he hides something he is unjust and deceitful, deceit is unlawful. What indicates that cheating is unlawful. It was narrated that the Prophet passed a man selling fruit and he liked the look of it, and when he entered his hands into it he noticed that it was wet, so he said: "What is this?" The man said: "The sky rained on it." Then the Prophet replied: "You should have put it on top of the food so that the people can see it. Whoever cheats us is not one of us."

The Third: The amount must not be concealed or diminished by rigging the scale or tampering with the weights. He must measure as he would like the people to measure for himself. God Almighty said: "Woe to those who give insufficient measure, * Who when others measure for them they take full measure * But when they measure out, or weigh out for others, they give less than due." (Surah 83 verses 1-3)

The Fourth: He must be truthful about the current price, and not conceal anything about it, as the Prophet has forbidden lying about local prices.

Also the Prophet has forbidden that someone stands before the seller while a buyer is negotiating with him, then he interferes by asserting he will buy at a higher price, although he has no intention of buying, in order only to force the price up on the buyer.

Chapter Four

Equitable Dealing

God Almighty has enjoined upon us justice and equitability. Justice is a cause for salvation and in trade it is a greater requirement than that of capital. Equitability is a cause for happiness and success and in trade it is an essential requirement. A wise person does not barter the dealing of this life in preference of the Hereafter. In the dealing for the Hereafter the religious person should not confine himself only to justice and distancing himself from injustice while leaving aside equitability.

One can gain the grade of equitability with one of the following six matters:-

1. One should not defraud his friend. If a buyer wants to pay more money than the usual price, because of his strong wish to help the seller due to his circumstances, the seller should not accept that, this is the equitable behaviour.
2. In tolerating defrauding, if the buyer buys food from a poor person whose circumstances indicate this, there is no blame on him if he is overlooks any increase in the price and he should accept this with understanding and feel that his desire is to do the right thing according to the saying of the Prophet: "God will have mercy upon the one who is easy in selling and easy in buying." But if he is buying from a rich trader who demands an excessive price which is more than the buyer can afford, here the toleration of the defrauding is not praiseworthy but it is a waste of money without reward.
3. Debt collection, equitable dealing in it is praiseworthy. On one occasion one should pardon, and on another one should permit them more time, and on yet another one should show them your mercy. The Prophet said: "God will have mercy upon the one who is easy in selling and easy in buying, easy in paying his debts and easy in demanding debts."

4. The repayment of debts, it is equitable to pay your debts once you are able without delay, and that it you should walk to the one who you owe money and pay him back in time without causing him to have to come to you and demand it. The Prophet said: "The best one of you is the one who pays his debt equitably."
5. The return of sold goods, one should accept with ease any goods you have sold to anyone if that person would be harmed in the purchase of them. As one should not accept to be a cause to harm another person. The Prophet said: "Whoever easily accepts the return of a deal from a regretful person, God Almighty will ease for him his difficulty on the Day of Judgment."
6. In dealing with poor people one must have mercy and kindness and afford them their self respect. The righteous people before us used to have two books for debts, one was coded so that no one would know the identities, this was the book for the poor and needy people, the poor people used to see the food and fruit and desire to have it, so they would go and say we need five pounds weight, for example, of this or that, and I have no money to pay you. They used to say to them, take what you want and pay when you are able. This gives the poor man the choice of paying if he is able or of being pardoned from payment. This was the manner of trading of the early Muslims. The one who still acts in this way is reviving the ordinance of the righteous. However, trading is a test for men, with it you can examine a man's religion and his piety and see how righteous he is. This is why it was said: "If a man was praised by his neighbours, and by his friends while traveling together, and by his dealers in the markets, do not have any doubt about his righteousness."

Chapter Five

Regarding the Traders' Concern for his Religion in his Affairs and in what Relates to his End

The trader's concern for his religion is shown in seven ways:

1. When he commences trading he does so with a good intention and that he intends from his business to suffice himself to avoid asking others for any help, to live lawfully, and to use what he gains from his business in the way of God.
2. He should intend in his business that he is doing his collective duty for if industry and trade were abandoned life would come to a stop and the people would perish. If every individual or group performs a specific duty life will proceed in an orderly manner, but if all people concentrated on one trade then necessities would not be found and general destruction would ensue. In this way the people have followed the saying of the Prophet: "The diversity of my nation is a mercy." This means the diversity of their professions and trades.
3. The market of this worldly life should not deter him from seeking the market of the Hereafter, the markets of the Hereafter are the mosques, God Almighty said: "Men who are not diverted by trade or merchandise from remembrance of God, and from establishing prayer and paying the alms." (Surah 24 verse 37).

From the righteousness of the early Muslims who used to make the start of the day and the end of the day for the Hereafter, and the middle of the day for trade.

5. One should not be over eager to trade, so that he is the first to arrive and the last to leave.
6. He should restrict himself to only distancing himself from the unlawful, but he should avoid matters in which there is doubt, and he should

not seek after fatwa but should consult his own heart. If he finds that his heart is uneasy he should abstain from it, if someone brings him goods of which he is doubtful, he should inquire about it until he feels sure, otherwise he would be consuming the dubious.

7. He must be aware of all his dealings and of each and every deal with his dealers, because he himself is watched and will be questioned, he should prepare the answer for the Day of Reckoning and Retribution, in every act and saying of his: why he did so? and for what? It has been said: that on the Day of Judgment the merchant will stand beside each person he sold to and he will be questioned regarding every worker who worked for him.

The Fourth Book
The Book of the Lawful and the Unlawful
Chapter One
On The Virtues of *Halal* (the lawful) and
the Evils of the *Haram* (the unlawful)
An Exposition on the types of *Halal* and its
degrees and types of *Haram* and its degrees,
and abstention of it
The Virtues of Halal and the Evils of the
Haram

The evidence for the virtues of the Halal and the evils of the Haram, God Almighty said: "...eat of the good things and do righteous deeds..." (Surah 23 verse 51). He commands the eating of good before good deeds. It is said what is meant by this is the lawful.

God Almighty said: "And do not usurp one another's property by false means..."

(Surah 2 verse 188)

God Almighty said: "O you who believe! Fear God and relinquish whatever remains from usury if you are believers;" (Surah 2 verse 278), then He said: "But if you do not, then be warned of a war from God and His Messenger; yet if you repent you shall have your capital fairly." (Surah 2 verse 279)

And He said: "...but whoever reverts, those are the inhabitants of the Fire, to dwell there forever." (Surah 2 verse 275) At first He warns against the devouring of usury, finally He decrees punishment with the Hell Fire for it.

As to the Tradition the Prophet said: "It may be that someone has un-combed hair, dusty clothes and looks like an itinerant, his food is haram, his clothes are haram and his living is haram, then he raises his hands to

heaven and says: 'O my Lord! O my Lord!' How would God accept his prayer?"

The Prophet also said: "Every piece of flesh which is developed from haram is in the Fire."

As to the sayings it was narrated that Abou Bakr al Siddiq (may God be pleased with him) was offered milk by one of his slaves which he had earned, so he asked the slave from where he had got the milk, so he said he acted as a fortune teller for some people and they gave him the milk in reward. Abou Bakr stuck his finger down his throat several times and regurgitated the milk back out, then he said: "Please my Lord I apologise to You for what my veins have carried and for what is mixed in my stomach."

Ibn Abbas (may God be pleased with them) said: "God does not accept the prayer of one who carries something unlawful in his stomach."

It was narrated that a righteous person sent food to somebody, then when he did not eat it, he asked him: "Why did you not eat it?" He answered: "We do not eat except halal, our hearts have been set straight upon that and we wish our situation to continue until we see the dominions of God Almighty and the Hereafter, had we eaten from what you eat for three days we would lose all the certainty we have in our hearts, and then the fear of God and the hope of the Hereafter would have gone from our hearts." So the righteous man told him: "I fast all the time, and I complete the Qur'an thirty times a month." So the person said to him: "This drink which you saw me drinking during the night is better to me than thirty completions of the Qur'an in three hundred kneelings of your deeds, and the drink was a milk of a wild gazelle."

It was narrated that Ali (may God be pleased with him) did not eat, after Osman ibn Affan was killed and his house was destroyed, except food which was sealed, in fear of doubts or uncertainty.

The Types of Halal and its Degrees

Money can be unlawful for a reason of itself or because of the way it was gained. This is explained in two parts:

The First Part

The Unlawful for a Reason in Itself

The expounding of this is that the edible material on the earth is no more than three types: either mineral, such as salt, mud, etc., or plant or animal.

Mineral: This is part of the earth and all that can be extracted from it. So eating it is not forbidden unless it is a substance harmful to the body, as some of it is poisonous. Bread, if it were harmful, would be forbidden.

Plants: Those which are forbidden are only those which intoxicate the mind, or kill or destroy the health.

As to the intoxicants; these are anesthetic, alcohol and all intoxicants which kill and poison. Whatever destroys the health and medicine which is used unnecessarily.

Animals: These are divided into the edible and the inedible; we have expounded these in the Book of the Ethics of Eating.

The Second Part

The Unlawful for the Way it was Gained

This comprises six parts:

The first part: What is taken from places that are unowned, such as from a mine, by hunting, gathering firewood, drinking from rivers, and cutting wild grasses. All these are lawful on the condition that what you have taken has not been collected by someone before you.

The second part: What is forcibly taken, such as war spoils and all the wealth belonging to the pagans and their fighters, this is all lawful to the Muslims if they pay from it one fifth and divide the remainder between those who deserve it.

The third part: What has been taken forcibly due to an unpaid debt.

This is lawful if there is a cause which was ruled upon by a judge or sultan.

The fourth part: What has been taken by being readily given to you in compensation. This is lawful if the conditions of compensation and the offer and acceptance agreed upon it.

The fifth part: What has been taken readily without compensation is lawful if the conditions of the contract agreed to it and it does not result in harming an inheritor or another.

The sixth part: That which you have no choice in its acquisition, such as inheritance, is lawful if the deceased gained the money in one or other of the above mentioned five ways.

The Degrees of *Halal* and *Haram*

Know that all the Haram is bad but some of it is worse than others. Halal is all good, but some of it is better than others.

The Fifth Book
The Ethics of Companionship and Fellowship
with various types of Men
Chapter One
On the Virtues of Companionship and Fel-
lowship, its Conditions, Degrees, Benefits
On the Virtues of Companionship and Fel-
lowship

Know that companionship is the fruit of good manners, separation is the fruit of bad manners. So good manners yield cordiality and companionship and coexistence. But bad manners yield hatred, envy and discord. As much as the producer is praiseworthy the fruit will be likewise. The virtues of good manners are evident in religion, God Almighty praised His Prophet for his good manners: “And surely you are of a great morality.” (Surah 68 verse 4) The Prophet said: “The greatest aid in admittance to Paradise is to fear God and good manners.”

The Prophet said: “I was sent to fulfill good manners.”

Jesus said: “Make yourself likable to God by your hatred for those who commit sins, and make yourself closer to God by distancing yourself from them, and seek the pleasure of God in your hatred of them.” They said: “O Jesus! Who should we sit with then?” He replied: “Sit with those who when you see them you remember God, and the one whose words increases your deeds, and whose deeds encourage you towards the End.”

In the sayings of the Companions, Ali (may God be pleased with him) said: “Adhere to your fellows, surely they are help for your life and the Hereafter, do you hear they saying of the inhabitants of the Fire?” ‘So we have no intercessors * Nor any true friend’.” (Surah 26 verse 100-101) Abd Allah ibn Umar (may God be pleased with them) said: “If I had fast-

ed the day and would not break it, if I stood all night in prayer without sleeping, and had spent all my money in the cause of God, I die the day I will die and there is love in my heart for the people who obey God Almighty, and I hate the people who disobey God, none of this would benefit me.”

Umar (may God be pleased with him) said: “If any of you have gained some affection from his brother he should hold to it, it is very rare to gain something like this.”

Al Fadil ibn Ayyad said: “The look of a man to the face of his brother with mercy and affection is worship.”

An Exposition on the Description of the One to be Chosen for Fellowship

Know that not every human is suitable for fellowship. The Prophet said: “The person is on the religion of his friend, so you should choose carefully who you take as a friend.” A friend must have a distinguished nature and character for which you desire his friendship.

What is derived from friendship are religious and worldly benefits: as to the worldly benefits, it may be to benefit from his wealth or his influence, or just to have the benefit of his companionship and nearness.

As for the religious benefit, there are various aspects, from these is the benefit of knowledge and deeds, also the use of influence to be protected from the harm of those who cast doubt in the hearts and hinder worship. And of these is the benefit of wealth to save the time spent in making a living, and to have assistance in times of hardship and difficulty, there is the benefit to be blessed by the prayers offered for your sake, as well as the expectation of intercession in the Hereafter, as some of the first Muslims have said: “Make more friends because for every believer there is an intercession, and you may be included in the intercession of your friend.” These are all benefits and each of them holds conditions which are not gained except through them, as we explain. There are five conditions which qualify the one who you choose as a friend:

He must be sound of mind, of good manner, not wicked nor one who invents in the religion, nor should he be eager for the worldly life.

God Almighty has said: "...And do not obey the one who follows his own lusts and so his heart has become unmindful of Our remembrance..."
(Surah 18 verse 29)

Chapter Two

The Due Rights of Brotherhood and Companionship

The Rights in Wealth

The Prophet said: “The similitude of two brothers (in Islam) is as two hands, one washes the other.” This means they share together difficulty and joy, wealth and circumstance.

Once you have sensed that your brother is in need of something, go offer it to him at once, do not wait for him to come to you to ask for it, because if you leave him until he asks it is a shortcoming on your side in brotherhood.

The Rights of Intervening for your Brother Spontaneously and in Preference

to One’s own Requirements

One should intervene before one is asked and to offer help with all happiness and show joy in doing so. Someone said: “If you asked your brother to do something for you, then he did not do it, remind him again, in case he has forgotten.”

Ibn Chabramah did a great favour for some brethren of his, so they brought him a present, and he asked: “What is this?” They said: “This is for what you have done for us.” He said: “Take your gift, may God pardon you.” And if you ask your brother to do something for you and he did not bother, you should wash to pray and repeat “God is Great” four times, and consider him dead.

Ghaffar ibn Mohammad said: “I vie in doing favours for my enemies in fear of their going away from me and seeking someone else.”

If this so regarding enemies, then how much more it should be regarding friends.

The early Muslims used to look after the family of their brethren for forty years after the death of a father among them, they used to attend to all the family's needs and visit them every day to supply them from their wealth so that they did not feel in need of anything other than their father who had died. They used to receive from them things which even their father had not bought for them in his life.

The priority of your brother's need should be the same as your own.

With Regard to the Tongue, Silence and Speaking

Silence is to refrain from making mention of the shortcomings of your fellow Muslim in his absence or in his presence. You should not spy or attempt to know anything of his circumstances or situation.

Mention of his bad behaviour or that of his family is backbiting, and this is unlawful and forbidden to every Muslim.

Ibn Mubarak said: "The true believer seeks excuses while the hypocrite seeks the shortcomings." As it is an obligation on you to restrain your tongue from making mention of his shortcomings, so it also an obligation to restrain your heart from misthinking, as misthinking is the backbiting of the heart, and that is also prohibited to every Muslim.

Speaking Out

Just as brotherhood requires that you should refrain from mentioning the shortcomings of your brother, it is also an obligation upon you to speak out about virtuous behaviour, it is an due right in brotherhood. Whoever is content with silence then he is a companion of the inhabitants of the grave. As silence is to refrain from harm so to speak out about virtuous behaviour is an obligation. One should show with one's tongue the extent of your happiness in sharing the happiness of his brother, the true meaning of brotherhood is to share mutual difficulty and ease. The Prophet said: "If any one of you likes his brother, he should inform him."

Al Shafi'i said: "Whoever admonishes his brother in private he has advised and honoured him, but if he admonishes him openly he has disgraced him."

The Pardoning of Minor Faults and Mistakes

The minor faults of friends are either in his religion by committing a sin, or in your due rights upon him in his neglect towards your friendship.

As to what he commits of sin against his religion and his persistence in it, it is your duty to admonish him gently regarding his faults and to try to bring him to control himself to return to righteousness and piety. If he still persists and you cannot effect any change upon him, the opinion of the Companions of the Prophet varied regarding whether to either continue in his affection or to boycott him completely. Abou Zarr (may God be pleased with him) favoured boycott and said: "If your brother has turned around from his way, hate him as you loved him." And he saw that according to the principle that 'Love should be in God and hate should be in God.' But Abou Darda' and his group of the Companions favoured the opposite, and Abou Darda' said: "If your brother has changed from his way, do not leave him to that. Definitely your brother will sometimes be straight and sometimes be deviant."

As to his mistakes towards his friend, it has been agreed that to pardon and tolerate is the best course of action.

As much as your brother has apologised to you, whether he was sincere or not, you must accept his apology.

Chapter Three

Regarding the Rights of the Muslim, the Womb and Neighbour

Know that the human must be either alone or with another, if he finds it difficult to live except by mixing with someone of his race, he cannot do that except by learning the ethics of mixing.

The relationship is either the close relatives, which is the most important tie, or the brotherhood of Islam which is a general tie which under the headings of brotherhood, friendship, companionship, neighbourliness, traveling companions, workmates and schoolmates.

To each of these relationships are degrees. The close relatives have due rights, but the womb relationship is a sacred one, and to the sacred is a right, but the rights of the parents are definite and greater. Thus is the neighbour's right, but it varies according to his proximity to your house.

Acquaintances have degrees of right, the one who you have seen and know, his right is not as the one who you know of by hearsay. And after acquaintance has taken place, it becomes stronger upon familiarity. Thus is the companionship which varies in its degrees, the right of the companion at school or in the workplace is stronger than the right of the traveling companion. Also friendship varies in degrees of right, if it is very strong it becomes brotherhood, and if it increases more it becomes an affection, and if it increases yet more it becomes a bosom friendship, and the bosom friend is closer than the beloved one.

The Rights of the Muslim

There rights of the Muslim are: If you meet him, you must salute with a greeting of peace, to answer him if he invites you, to invoke blessings upon him if he sneezes, to visit him if he is sick, to attend his funeral when he dies, to comply with his oath if he swears upon a thing, to offer

your advice if he seeks it, to preserve him in his absence, and to love for him what you love for yourself, and to hate for him what you hate for yourself.

The Prophet said: “If you are seated with others then you wish to leave, you must give greetings of peace, but if you see that it is necessary for you to stay, then if you wish to leave again, you must give greetings of peace again, as the first is not more worthy than the last.”

And he also said: “If you see me coming, do not stand for me, this is only the way of the unbelievers.”

Gaber and Abou Talha said: “We heard the Prophet say: ‘Any Muslim who assists another Muslim when his honour has been violated, and his integrity has been breached, most surely God will assist him to a position to which he likes to be assisted. And any person who abandons a Muslim when his integrity has been breached, most surely God will abandon him in a position where he will need to be assisted’.”

The Prophet said with regard to sneezing: “One who sneezes must say: ‘All praise be to God for all things,’ and the one who hears him must say: ‘God give you mercy,’ the one who sneezes must reply, ‘May God guide you and give you serenity’.”

A Muslim should distance himself from mixing with the rich, and he should prefer the company of the humble, he should be kind to orphans.

The Prophet said: “Please God make me live humbly and make me die humbly and gather me with the humble.”

The Prophet said: “Whoever visits a sick person is like the one who sits in a garden in spring breezes, and when he stands up seventy thousand angels are entrusted to pray upon him until the night.”

Attending funerals: The Prophet said: “Whoever attends a funeral, he will get one qirat of reward, and if he waits until the burial, he will get two qirats.

The Rights of Neighbours

Know that the neighbour has rights beyond the rights of brotherhood. The Muslim neighbour deserve what every Muslim deserves and more, the Prophet said: "Whoever believes in God and the Last Day let him honour his neighbour." The Prophet also said: "No servant will be a believer until his neighbour is safe from his harm."

It was said to the Prophet: "A woman fasts the day and prays all night, but she harms her neighbours." He said: "She is in the Hell Fire."

The Rights of Relatives and the Womb

The Prophet said: "God High Exalted says: 'I am the Merciful, (al rahman) and this is the womb (al rahma), I cut for her a name of Mine, so whoever joins it, I will join him, and whoever severs it, I will sever him'."

The Prophet said: "Whoever wishes to have his life prolonged and his bounty extended, let him join his womb relations."

The Rights of Parents and Child

It is not unheard-of that of the rights of the womb and the relatives the most important are the rights of the womb, and of these the greatest is that of parturition. The due rights in it are double. The Prophet said: "Being good to parents is much better than praying and charity and fasting and pilgrimage and Umrah and jihad for God's cause."

And the Prophet said: "Be good to your mother and your father, and your sister and your brother, then whoever follows them in kin."

And he also said: "The greatest goodness is that a person continues the goodness his father extended to his family after his father has gone."

It is preferable to be kind and affectionate to your child: Al Aqrah ibn Habis saw the Prophet kissing his grandson al Hasan, so Al Aqrah said: "I have ten children and I have never kissed any of them!" The Prophet said: "The one who does not show mercy will never see any."

Abou Said al Houdari said: "A man from Yemen migrated to the

Prophet wishing to join Jihad, the Prophet said: “Are your parents in Yemen?” The man said: “Yes.” The Prophet asked: “Did you obtain their permission?” He said: “No.” The Prophet said: “Return back to your parents and seek their permission, if they grant you their permission, then join the jihad, otherwise be good to them as much as you can. This is the best which you will meet God Almighty with after certifying that there is none but Him.”

The Sixth Book

On Seclusion

Chapter One

Schools of Thought Regarding Seclusion, the Sayings and Each Party's Opinion

The various schools of thought and many righteous ancestors have held differing views regarding seclusion. Some have preferred seclusion to associating. Among these were Sufian al Thawrri, Ibrahim ibn Adham, Dawoud al Ta'i, Fudail ibn Iyad, Suliman al Khawas, Yousef ibn Asbat, Hozafah al Marashi and Bishr al Hafi.

Most of the righteous ancestors have preferred associating and having more acquaintances, friends, brothers, and to drawing close to the believers to assist them in the religion, and to cooperate together in piety and goodness. They number among them, Said ibn al Maseeb, al Shabi, Ibn Abi Layla, Hisham bin Auwra, Ibn Shbromah, Churiah, Charik bin AbdAllah, Ibn Oyeenah, Ibn Al Mubarak, Al Shafi'i, Ahmad Bin Hanbal, and others.

The Argument of Those who Favour Associating and its Weakness

They argue according to the sayings of God Almighty: "...And do not be as those who are divided and differ..." (Surah 3 verse 105) And He High Exalted also said: "...and He brought your hearts together..." (Surah 3 verse 103) He bestows upon the people by the cause which brought their hearts together. This is a weak argument because what is meant by this differs in opinion and schools of thought regarding the Book of God and the roots of Shariah. What is meant by bringing hearts together is to extract any hatred from the hearts, as it is the cause for disharmony. Seclusion does not contradict that.

They also used the sayings of the Prophet: "The believer is likable, there is no goodness in the one who does not like others, nor others like him." This is a weak argument because it indicates the blameworthy aspects of the bad character which prevent friendship. They also use his saying: "Whoever departs from the group one hand span has taken the bond of Islam from his neck." And he also said: "Whoever departs from the group, then dies, he has died in unbelief." This argument is weak because what is meant by this Hadith is the group which agrees by consensus on one Imam, so disagreement with them is wrongdoing.

The argument of those who favour Seclusion

They argue by means of what God Almighty said in the account of Ibrahim (peace be upon him) : "And I will stay away from you and that you invoke other than God; I will invoke my Lord alone, that I may be blessed in my invocation." (Surah 19 verse 48) Then God High Exalted said: "So when he distanced himself from them and that which they worshipped other than God; We granted to him, Isaac and Jacob, and each one of them We made a Prophet." (Surah 19 verse 49) Indicating that this is by the blessings of seclusion.

This argument is weak because there is no goodness in associating with unbelievers except calling them to Islam, and when you despair of that, you must depart their company. While the argument is about associating with Muslims and what blessing there is in it.

They also argue by means of the sayings of Moses (peace be upon him): "And if you do not believe in me, leave me alone" (Surah 44 verse 21) Here Moses has fled into seclusion when he despaired from them, and God High Exalted said about the people of the cave: "And when you have gone apart from them and that they worship other than God, take refuge in the Cave, and your Lord will extend to you His Mercy..." (Surah 18 verse 16) He commanded them to seclude themselves. Our Prophet secluded himself from Quraish when they harmed him, and he ordered his Companions to seclude themselves and to emigrate to Abyssinia, then they joined him in Madinah after God Almighty gave

them victory there. This is also seclusion from the unbelievers after despairing from them. As the Prophet did not seclude himself from the Muslims, nor from those who he expected to be Muslim from among the unbelievers. The people of the cave were believers and they did not seclude themselves from each other, but they secluded themselves from the pagans, while the argument that is raised here is the seclusion of Muslims from each other.

Chapter Two

The Benefits of Seclusion

The benefits of seclusion are divided into religious benefits and worldly benefits:

The religious benefits are divided into what you can gain from worship in seclusion, by consistency in worship and reflection and pursuing of knowledge, to avoiding temptations which are prevalent in associating with people, such as: hypocrisy, backbiting, failure to enjoin good and forbid evil, to be influenced by associating with people of bad character and behaviour.

As to the worldly benefits are divided into what you can gain from seclusion, as the professional would be able in his seclusion to avoid the forbidden things he exposes himself to when he associates with others, such as being deluded by this worldly life and how everyone vies for the gains of this life, his greed for gaining what the people have and their greed towards what he has. Associating will show up his virtues, if he has any, he will be harmed by the bad manner of the one he spends time with, he will have to argue with him all the time, or be harmed by his misthinking or his backbiting or envy or the harm of his heavy personality or ugliness of character. Avoiding these is the benefit of seclusion.

The Disadvantages of Seclusion

Know that to achieve the religious and worldly aims you must be assisted by the others, and that will not be achieved except by associating with others. All which is of benefit to you in associating is missed in seclusion, and what is missed is of the disadvantages of seclusion. So look to the benefits of associating and the need for it, and what you gain from it, such as mutual benefit, teaching and instruction, to gain the reward for standing for justice and due right, humility, the benefit gained from the experience of others, and the use of it as an example for yourself. These are among the benefits of associating with others.

The Seventh Book
The Ethics of Travel
Chapter One
Concerning the Ethics for the Journey from
Outset to the Return and the Intention of
Traveling and Its Benefits
Part One
The Benefit of Travel and its
Excellence and Intention

Know that travel is a kind of movement and association in which there are advantages and disadvantages.

The benefits which are an incentive to travel are derived either from fleeing from something or seeking something. The traveler may be traveling because there is some disturbance in the place he lives, and if the disturbance had not occurred he would not have traveled, or he might have a purpose for which he travels, or he may be seeking something somewhere.

Taking flight from a matter which is harmful to him in his worldly affairs: such as the plague, a local epidemic, or fear of adversity, or cost of living. It is either collective or individual as in the case of one who has the intention to escape from some harm in his own town.

As for the religious benefits, such as when someone has been tried with influence and wealth and many causes which hindered him from devoting himself to God alone, he would prefer travel and laziness and to distance himself from wealth and influence, or as in the one who has been forced into invention, or has been appointed to a position which is unlawful for him, so he seeks to take flight from it.

What is required from traveling is either worldly things such as wealth and influence, or religious. The religious is either knowledge or work.

Knowledge is either religious science or human science or the science of the earth and its wonders, as the journey of Zul Qarnain in his tour around the earth.

Work is either worship or a visit, worship is pilgrimage, Umrah and Jihad. The visit is also of devotion, such as the intention to visit a place like Makkah or Jerusalem, and ports like Alexandria, as staying there is a kind of devotion, or it may be the intention is to visit the righteous people and the scholars and they are either dead, so you visit their graves, or alive, and you will be blessed by seeing them. You would benefit from seeing their circumstances in strengthening your desire to take them as your example.

These are the benefits of travel, and we gain from it that travel is divided into blameworthy, praiseworthy, and the permissible.

The blameworthy is divided into the unlawful such as the one who travels leaving behind his parents alone, and the disliked such as traveling out of a town where there is a plague.

The praiseworthy is divided into the obligatory such as the pilgrimage and the quest for knowledge, which is an obligation upon every Muslim, the commendable such as visiting scholars and observing them.

From all these the intention of travel is clear, as the meaning of the intention is the incentive which causes you to travel and the setting out to answer the invitation.

Let him have the Hereafter as his intention in all his travels, and that is evident in the obligatory and the commendable, but it is impossible in the disliked and forbidden.

As for the permissible, it depends upon the intention. As long as his intention in seeking wealth is to suffice himself from asking, and to keep the dignity of his family and to spend in charity according to what can be afforded, this permissible will become, with this intention of the Hereafter, work. But if he traveled to make pilgrimage but his incentive was for show, that would be out of being acts of the Hereafter, this is because of what the Prophet said: "Surely the deed is according to the intention."

Part Two

Concerning the Ethics of the Traveler from his Setting Out to his Return

The traveler should pay his debts before leaving, and make arrangements for those he is obliged to support, and return all trusts to their owners, if he has any, and he should not take with him any provisions except what is lawful and good. And he should take extra provisions with him to give to his traveling companions. Ibn Umar (may God be pleased with them) said: "From the generosity of a man is the goodness of his provisions when he travels."

When traveling it is necessary to speak kindly to the people and to offer food and to behave in a good mannered way on the journey.

He should chose a companion so that he does not travel alone. A companion who would help him in the religion, so if he forgets, he reminds him, and help him if he remembers. As the Prophet said: "A man is on the religion of his friend." And the Prophet has forbidden any person from traveling alone.

He should go to bid farewell to friends and family, to offer the prayer of the Prophet upon his departure.

Someone said: "I accompanied Abd Allah ibn Umar (may God be pleased with them) from Makkah to Madinah, and when I wanted to leave him, he saw me off and said: 'I heard the Prophet saying: 'Luqman said most surely when God Almighty is entrusted with something He keeps it. And I am entrusting God Almighty with your religion, your sincerity and the seal of your deeds'.'"

The traveler should perform the prayer of asking God to choose for him before his travel, according to what we have described in the book of prayer. At the time of his departure he should perform the prayer for traveling. When he reaches the door of his house he should say: "In the name of God, I put my trust in God, there is no power nor intercession except

with God, my Lord I seek refuge in you that I mislead or be misled or that I humiliate someone or that I be humiliated, or oppress or be oppressed, or to be ignorant or have things kept from me.” And when he walks he must say: “O God by You I travel, and upon You I rely, there is no power or intercession except with You and towards You I set myself. O God You are my trust and You are my hope, keep me away from worry, there is no god but You, O God endue me with piety, and forgive me my sins, and turn me towards good wherever I go.”

He should leave the house early. Gaber said: “The Prophet departed on Thursday when he was going to Tabuk and said: ‘O God bless my nation in their earliness’.”

The traveler should take with him six things. Aisha (may God be pleased with her) said: “When he traveled the Prophet used to take six things with him: a mirror, a bottle, a scissors, a siwak (toothbrush) kohl, and a comb.

Concerning the Ethics of Returning from Travel

The Prophet used, on his return from campaign or pilgrimage or Umrah, to praise God upon every hillock of the earth three times and say: “There is no god but God alone, no partner to Him, to Him is the dominion and all thanks, and He has power over all things, we are returning repentant, worshiping, prostrating, to our Lord we are most grateful. God has fulfilled His promise and given victory to His servant and alone has defeated the allies.”

And when he arrives back in his town, he should say: “O God make for us in it a stay and a good provision.” And he should send in advance to his family someone to give them glad tidings of his arrival, so that he does not enter upon them suddenly, and might see them while they are unprepared. He should not arrive at his house at night, as the Prophet has forbidden that. He used, on his return, to enter the Mosque first and pray two kneelings and then enter the house, and when he entered said: “We repent and return to our Lord. Our Lord no sin should take us suddenly.”

Chapter Two

Concerning What the Traveler Should Learn of What is Permissible During Travel, the Direction of the *Qiblah* and the Time of Prayer

Know that the traveler needs at the outset his journey to provide for his worldly life and for his end.

As to the provision for this worldly life: it is food and drink and what he will need for his expenses. But if he leaves without provision, there is no blame on him in this, if his travel was in the company of others, or if his journey is through villages which are at a near distance to each other. But if he travels through the desert alone or with others who have no food or drink, if he was one of those who can tolerate hunger a week or tens days, if he can manage to live by eating grass he may do that. But if he cannot bear hunger nor tolerate eating grass, his departure without food is an sin as he would be throwing himself into destruction.

As to the provision of the Hereafter, it is the knowledge which he needs in his purity, fasting, prayer, and worship, so he must equip himself with it. This would alleviate the burden of travel as he needs to know about shortening the prayer, gathering in prayer, and breaking the fast. To enable him to learn about matters he did not need to know about before traveling, such as the direction of the *Qiblah* and the time of prayers.

The Eighth Book

On Audition and Emotion

Chapter One

The Disagreement Among Scholars Regarding the Permissibility of Audition and an Exposition on the Truth Concerning It

An Exposition on the Opinion of the Scholars and Sufis Regarding its Lawfulness or Unlawfulness

Know that audition is the primary factor in any matter, it then develops in the heart a condition called emotion, the emotion develops into moving the limbs in either an unbalanced move, which is called a disturbance, or in a balanced move, which is called an applause and dance.

Let us begin with audition, which is the primary factor, and to tell you what has been put forward about it by the various schools of thought. Then we will show the evidence of its permissibility, then we will respond to those who favour its prohibition.

As for the schools of thought: Judge Al Abou Taib al Tabbari has related to Al Shafi'i, and Malik, and Abou Hanifah and Sufyan, and a group of scholars, sayings indicating that they were of the opinion favouring its prohibition.

Al Shafi'i (may God have mercy upon him) has said in his book on the ethics of judgment: "Singing is a disliked amusement akin to falsehood, and whoever indulges in it is foolish and his testimony is unacceptable."

But Malik (may God have mercy upon him) has forbidden singing and said: "If any of you bought a slave girl and found her to be a singer, you should send her back." And this opinion is also held by all the people of

Madinah except Ibrahim ibn Saad and his grandfather.

Abou Hanifah (may God be pleased with him) used to hate singing, and he made listening to it a sin, and thus were the entire people of al Kufah: Sufyan al Thawri, Hammad, Ibrahim, and Al Sha'bi and others.

Abou Talib al Makki conveyed from a group that audition is permissible and said that he heard this from some of the Companions; Abd Allah ibn Ghaffar, Abd Allah ibn al Zubayr, al Mughirah ibn Shu'bah and Mu'awiyah and others. And he also said: "Many of the righteous ancestors have said the same. Whether they were of the Companions or followers."

It was said to Abi al Hassan bin Salem: "How do you reject audition while al Genade, Sirri al Saqti, and Zul al Noon listened to it?" So he said: "How would I reject audition while those who are better than me permit it. Abd Allah ibn Ghaffar al Tayyar (the flying) used to listen to it, but I reject the use of audition in jesting and playing."

An Exposition on the Evidence

in Favour of Audition

We begin by saying: the text and analogy all indicate its permissibility.

As to analogy: It is that singing is surrounded by many meanings each of which should be individually and collectively investigated. There is audition of a good voice well balanced and comprehensible which moves the emotions, the general conclusion is that it is a good voice. Then the good voice divides into the balanced and unbalanced. The balanced divides into what is comprehensible, such as poetry and the incomprehensible, such as the sounds of solids and all animals.

As for listening to a good voice, since it is good it should not be prohibited, but it is lawful according to text and analogy.

As for text: Text indicates the permissibility of hearing the beautiful voice in a way of appreciation of what God Almighty has bestowed upon

His servants, as He said: "...He increases creation as He pleases..." (Surah 35 verse 1). It is said that this is the beautiful voice.

Abou Soliman said: "Audition does not produce something that does not exist in the heart, but it moves what is in it." Chanting of rhymed poetry is acceptable in certain circumstances, such as the singing of the pilgrim, and the soldier as an incentive and morale booster, and this is permissible. Rhythmic wailing and lamenting increases grief, weeping and depression. Grief is two parts: Praiseworthy and blameworthy:

The blameworthy is to grieve over what you have missed. And to grieve for the deceased and the like is discontent for the fate of God and sorrow for what you cannot attain. This kind of grief is blameworthy, that is why its prohibition is so clear.

The praiseworthy grief is the grief of the human for his shortcomings with regard to his religion, it is his sorrow for his sins, in such case to weep or feel sorrow is praiseworthy.

Audition for pleasure is permissible if the pleasure is upon the occasion of a feast or a wedding, or upon someone's return from absence, or at al aqiqah or upon the birth or circumcision of a child, or at the end of a memorisation of the Glorious Qur'an. All this is permissible in order to show happiness.

The evidence for the permissibility of this was shown on the occasion when the Prophet was arriving in Madinah and the women went to the rooftops with tambourines and chanted in joy at his arrival. To show delight at the arrival of the Prophet is praiseworthy, showing pleasure in poetry and dance and movement is also praiseworthy.

Aisha (may God be pleased with her) said: "I saw the Prophet covering me with his garment while I was watching the Abyssinians playing in the mosque, and he let me watch until I had had enough of watching."

Aisha (may God be pleased with her) also said: "The Prophet entered while I had two girls singing, so he lay down on his rug and turned his face away, then Abou Bakr (may God be pleased with him) came in and

scolded me saying: 'The tool of Satan at the house of the Prophet?' The Prophet turned toward him and said: 'Leave them be.' So when he went to sleep, I motioned to them to leave."

These are all true Hadiths which show clearly that singing and play are not unlawful.

An Exposition on the Circumstances

in which Audition is Forbidden

If you would ask are there circumstances in which audition is forbidden?

I would say, it is forbidden in five instances:

1. In the case of the one who is singing, if she is a woman and it is unlawful for him to look at her, and he fears temptation from listening to her, then it is unlawful because of the fear of temptation not because of the singing itself.
2. In the case of the instrument, if it is a single piped instrument or a stringed instrument or a drum, these three are forbidden, other than that is permissible.
3. In the case of rhythmic singing, if it is poetry, if it is something indecent or slander or something untrue about God and His Messenger or the Companions, listening to it is unlawful, and the one who listens shares in the sin of the one who says it.
4. In the case of the one who listens to it persistently, if he is overtaken by a desire in listening to it. Then listening to it is unlawful.
5. In the case of the person of the common people and the love of God Almighty does not overtake him, but he is controlled by his desires, then audition should be forbidden to him.

The Ninth Book

On Enjoining Good and Forbidding Evil

Chapter One

The Obligation of Enjoining Good and Forbidding Evil and its Virtues and the Evil of Neglecting and Losing it

As for the evidence for enjoining good and forbidding evil in the Qur'an God Almighty said: "And be a nation inviting to uprightness and enjoining right and forbidding wrong, those they are the successful." (Surah 3 verse 104) In this verse the obligation is clear, as Glory be to Him says: "And be.." this is an order, and the exposition of success is related to the order if it has been carried out, as He said: "...those they are the successful." It is shown that this is a collective duty, not an individual duty and if some have attended to it, the obligation will be lifted from the others. Since He did not say 'be all of you inviting to uprightness and enjoining right and forbidding wrong,' but He said: "Be a nation.."

He High Exalted has also said: "Not all the people of earlier Scripture are the same, there are some of them steadfast reciting the Revelations of God (Qur'an) all night and prostrate in prayer before God- * They believe in God and the Last Day, they enjoin right and forbid wrong, and vie with one another in good deeds, these are among the righteous." (Surah 3 verse 113-114) So God Almighty did not state that they are righteous just because they believe in God and the Last Day, but they enjoin good and forbid evil.

And also God High Exalted said: "And the believing men and the believing women, they are the friends of each other, they enjoin good and forbid evil, and establish prayers..." (Surah 9 verse 71)

He described them as believers in that they enjoin good and forbid evil, so the one who neglects enjoining good and forbidding evil is not one of the believers according to this verse.

As for the evidence of enjoining good and forbidding evil in Tradition, Abou Bakr (may God be pleased with him) said in his speech: “O people you are reading this verse and explaining it contrary to its meaning: ‘O you who believe! Take care of your own souls, he who is astray cannot harm you, if you are rightly guided...’ (Surah 5 verse 105) I have heard the Prophet saying: ‘Any people who are committing sins and there are among them those who are able to forbid them from doing that, and he failed to do so, surely God will smite them all with a severe punishment from Him’.”

The Prophet said: “O people, God said: ‘You should enjoin good and forbid evil or you will not get any response to your prayer’.”

As to the evidence of enjoining good and forbidding evil in the sayings of the Companions: Abou Darda’ (may God be pleased with him) said: “You should enjoin good and forbid evil or God will incite against you an oppressor ruler who will not respect your elderly nor would he have mercy to your young, the best of you will pray against him, but their prayer will not be accepted, and you will seek help but you will not get it, and you will seek forgiveness but will not be forgiven.”

Hathitha (may God be pleased with him) was asked about the living dead, he said: “He is the one who does not not forbid the unlawful by his hand nor by his tongue, nor by his heart.”

Ali ibn Abou Talib (may God be pleased with him) said: “The first of what you overcome in jihad is the jihad with your hands, then jihad with your tongues, then jihad with your hearts, but if your heart does not know maruf (enjoining good) and does not forbid the unlawful, then it is turned upside down.”

It was said to Fudail: “Are you not going to enjoin and forbid?” He said: “There was a people who enjoined and forbade, then they became pagans, this is because they could not bear patiently the consequences of their enjoining and forbidding.”

It was said to al Thawri: “Do you not enjoin what is good and forbid what is evil?” He said: “If the sea bursts, who is able to hold it back?”

This explains the real purpose of the Islamic society: that people adopt piety and virtue in their lives and do their utmost to help eradicate sin, evil and injustice, and promote and establish virtue, goodness and justice in their individual and social relationships.

So to conduct human life upon these lines, the Shariah states its norms of virtues and good (*ma'rufat*) and of avoidance of sin and evils (*munkarat*) to which the individual and society conduct must conform. It not merely provides an inventory of virtues and vices for man but also lays down the whole scheme of life in such a way that virtues may flourish without being polluted or retarded by vices. The Shariah conducts human society towards the free growth of good, virtue and truth in every area of life. This gives full play to the forces of good in all directions and at the same time removes all impediments in the path of virtue. In order to eradicate evil from society, it prohibits vice and closes all possible doors from which it can creep into society.

The Virtues of Enjoining Good

Virtues are classified into three categories:

1. Mandatory (*fard*)
2. Recommended (*matlub*)
3. Permissible (*mubah*)

The mandatory are obligatory and every member of a Muslim society must observe and practise these commandments. The recommended virtues are those which are desirable and the Shariah wants them to be observed and practised by people. The growth of these is encouraged in a Muslim society but actual observance is left to the discretion of the individual. All others which are not prohibited are permissible and, again, are left to individual taste and social practice. The person has complete freedom of choice depending upon his own tastes and preferences.

Chapter Two

The Principles of Enjoining Good and its Conditions

Know that the principles in al hisbah of comprehensive obligation towards enjoining good and forbidding evil are four:

1. *Al muhtasab* (one for which you can expect reward in the Hereafter)
He should be a faithful Muslim and true believer who is fair and just, who has attained full age, is of sound mind and able.
2. *Al muhtasab alayh*: Any human who commits a forbidden sin.
3. *Al muhtasab fi*: Every forbidden evil which presents itself to you, and is known to be forbidden which is openly evident to you. If anyone commits a sin inside his own house, closing his doors upon himself, it is not permissible for another person to spy upon him. God Almighty has forbidden that: “O you who believe! Do not enter houses other than your own houses until you have asked permission, and given salutations to the people therein...” (Surah 24 verse 27).
4. *Ihtisab* comprises degrees and ethics. As to the degrees, first is to know, then to forbid, then to advise and admonish, then to scold, then to restrain with your hands, then to threaten with beating, then to beat, then to use a weapon, then to seek the help of others.

As for the ethics, the ethics of al muhtasab, are comprised of three characteristics: knowledge, piety, and good manners.

With these three characteristics al hisbah becomes one of the good deeds which repel the unlawful.

Chapter Three

Munkarat

The Customary Prohibitions in the Habits of the People

Prohibited things (munkarat) are of two kinds:

1. *haram* (unlawful)
2. *makruh* (disliked)

Muslims are to abstain totally from forbidden (*haram*) things, but in the case of *makruhat* (disliked) the Shariah shows, expressly or by implication, disapproval. There are several things, between these two extremes of *haram* and *makruhat*, which are on the border. The Shariah has, however, given strict prohibitory orders against those bordering on *haram*, but left the case of those bordering on *makruhat* to the discretion and tastes of individual members of the Muslim society. Both these measures help a great deal in establishing and promoting virtue and good and eradicating and discouraging evil and sin in society.

The Tenth Book

The Ethics of Living as Exemplified in the Virtues of the Prophet

I had resolved to end the “Quarter of Customs” of this book with a comprehensive book dealing with the manners of living, in order that their deduction from the entirety of this book should not be difficult for the student. Then I realised, however, that each book of the “Quarter of Customs” had already dealt with a particular class of manners, and since I find the task of repetition painful and tedious; people being disposed to a dislike of the repetition of customs; I have decided to restrict myself in this book to the mention of the manner and character of the Prophet, peace and prayers be upon him, as related by tradition. In this, I will weave together the reports, section by section, without their isnads (chain of authority relating to a particular report), in order to bring together in this book, in addition to the mention of the manners of Mohammad, the restoration and strengthening of the faith through the testimony of Mohammad’s noble character; a fact to which the single traditions testify without a doubt, namely, that he was the most noble of God’s creations, and the most noble in rank and power. Hence, how much more so is this true when the traditions are all combined.

The Account of God’s Disciplining Mohammad, His friend and His Chosen,

by the Qur’an

The Messenger of God was very humble and supplicatory of God, continuously asking Him to adorn him with fine qualities of breeding, and noble qualities of character. While praying he used to say: “O God, embellish my external and internal natures,” and “O God, cause me to shun the disapproved qualities of character.” At this God Almighty answered his prayer - faithful to His statement: “Call upon Me and I shall answer you...” (Surah 40 verse 60) - by sending down the Qur’an and

disciplining him through its teaching, so that Mohammad's nature was the Qur'an.

S'ad ibn Hisham said: "I visited Aisha, may God be pleased with her and her father, and asked her concerning the character of the Messenger of God. She said: "Do you not read the Qur'an?" I said: "Yes." Then she said: "The moral nature of the Messenger of God was the Qur'an'."

Only the Qur'an disciplined him by the examples of its word; e.g. "Be pardoning, enjoin what is right and excuse the ignorant. (Surah 7 verse 199)

"Most surely God enjoins justice, the doing of good deeds and generosity to near of kin, and He forbids indecency, abomination and tyranny..." (Surah 16 verse 90)

"...bear with patience whatever befalls you, this is true steadfastness. (Surah 31 verse 17)

"And whoever shows patience and forgiveness, surely that is true fortitude." (Surah 42 verse 43)

"So ignore them, and disregard their treason. Surely God loves the charitable.." (Surah 5 verse 13)

"...but let them pardon and forgive. Do you not love that God should forgive you?" (Surah 24 verse 22)

"...Repel evil with what is best, then he with whom you had enmity shall become as a loyal friend!" (Surah 41 verse 34)

"...who restrain anger, and pardon people, and God loves the charitable." (Surah 3 verse 134)

"...Shun most suspicion, some suspicion is a sin. And do not spy, nor backbite each other..." (Surah 49 verse 12)

When the Prophet's two front teeth were broken and he was wounded in the Battle of Uhud, so that the blood flowed over his face, he wiped the blood saying: "How do a people who dye the face of their Prophet with blood succeed, while he calls them to their Lord!" At this God sent

down the verse: "The matter is not in your hands..." (Surah 3 verse 128) as a directive in regard to that - there being innumerable examples of these directives in the Qur'an.

The Prophet was the first intended for the function of disciplining and refining. Then the light spread from him over the whole of creation, for he was disciplined by means of the Qur'an and he in turn disciplined creation. For this reason he said: "I was sent to complete the noble qualities of character." After which mankind became desirous of the fine qualities of character as we mentioned in the book *Riyadat al-Nafs wa Tahdhib al-Akhlaq* (The training of the soul and the refinement of character), a process which we will not mention here.

When God Almighty perfected his character, He praised him and said: "And surely you are of a great morality." (Surah 68 verse 4) Then God Almighty - how great is His state and how perfect is His bestowing of favour - viewing Mohammad's complete kindness and his great excellence - how munificently He bestowed - praised him. Furthermore, He Who had embellished him with the noble character added that praise and said: "And surely you are of a great morality." (Surah 68 verse 4). Thereafter the Messenger of God explained to mankind that God loves the fine qualities of character and detests the bad qualities of character.

Ali said: "How strange that a Muslim, when a fellow Muslim comes to him in need, does not regard himself obliged to bestow favour. For even if he did not hope for reward and did not fear punishment, it still would have been necessary for him to hasten to act generously, since good actions point the path to salvation." Then a man said to Ali: "Did you hear this from the Messenger of God?" And Ali said: "Yes, and that which is better than this. When the prisoners of Tayyi were brought, there arose a girl from amongst them who said: "O Mohammad, would that you free me and prevent the Arab tribes from rejoicing at my bad fortune; for I am a daughter of the chief of my people, who defended the family, freed the captive, sated the hungry, fed, extended greetings, and never refused anyone who sought him in need. I am a daughter of Hatim

al-Ta'i." Then the Prophet said: "O girl, this is truly the description of the Muslims. If your father were a Muslim, we would say: 'God have mercy on him.' Free her! For her father loved the noble qualities of character and indeed God loves these qualities." Then Abou Burda ibn Niyar arose and said: "O Messenger of God, does God love the noble qualities of character?" And the Prophet replied: "By Him in whose hands is my life, no one shall enter Paradise except he who is of good character." And on the authority of Mu'adh ibn Jabal it is related that the Prophet said: "Indeed God encompasses Islam with noble qualities of character and with fine deeds."

Now amongst these qualities are: having pleasant social relations, doing noble actions, being submissive, bestowing favour, feeding others, extending greetings, visiting the sick Muslim whether he be pious or profligate, escorting the bier of a Muslim, protecting your neighbour whether he be Muslim or a disbeliever, honouring the aged Muslim, answering the invitation to food, the inviting of others, bestowing pardon, making peace between people, liberality, nobility of character, forbearance, being the first to extend greeting, repressing anger, pardoning people, shunning what Islam forbids, namely, frivolous sports, vanity, song, all musical instruments, revenge, guile, slander, falsehood, avarice, niggardliness, rudeness, artifice, deception, calumny, wronging friendship, forsaking blood kindred, bad moral character, haughtiness, boasting, self-conceit, arrogance, pride, immoderation, foulness of language, rancour, envy, levity, injustice, oppression and tyranny.

Anas ibn Malik said: "Mohammad did not call out 'a fine counsel' without having induced and ordered us to follow it, nor did he call out 'fraud' or say 'vice' or 'disgraceful' but that he cautioned and prohibited us in regard to it." And this verse of the Qur'an will suffice for all of these maxims: "Most surely God enjoins justice, the doing of good deeds..." (Surah 16 verse 90)

Mu'adh ibn Jabal said: "The Messenger of God commanded me saying: 'O Mu'adh, I command you to fear God, to report truthfully, to ful-

fill the oath, to act loyally, to avoid perfidious actions, to care for the neighbour, to have mercy on the orphan, to be soft spoken, to be liberal of extending greeting, to perform fine acts, to limit expectation, to cleave to the faith, to study the Qur'an, to love the other life, to be anxious in regard to the Reckoning, to act humbly; I forbid you to abuse the learned, to accuse an honest man of lying, to obey the sinner, to disobey a just man, to put a land in disorder; and I command you to fear God at every stone, tree or village, and that you show repentance for every sin, secret or public'."

Thus the Prophet disciplined the servants of God and urged them to be well mannered and to possess the noble qualities of character.

A Summary Account of his Fine Qualities of Character, Which Certain of the Learned Have Gathered and Collected from the Reports

The Messenger of God was the most forbearing, honest, just and chaste of men. His hand never touched the hand of a woman over whom he did not have the right of control, with whom he did not have the right to sexual relations, or who was unlawful for him to marry. He was the most generous of men. Neither a dinar nor a dirham was left him in the evening. If something remained, and there was not anyone to whom he could give this excess - night having fallen unexpectedly - he did not retire to his lodging until he was able to give this excess to whoever was in need of it.

The Messenger of God did not take of those things which God gave him, except his yearly provisions. He gave the remaining excess of his small quantity of dates and barley to charity. He was never asked for anything but he gave it (to he who asked), moreover, he returned to his yearly provisions (which he stored for his family) and (taking of them) preferred him (the seeker) over himself and his family. Thus he was often in need before the end of the year, if nothing was presented to him. He patched his sandals and clothing, performed household duties, and ate meat with his women folk.

The Prophet was the most bashful of men and did not stare into anyone's face. He answered the invitation of the slave and the freeborn. He accepted presents, even if they consisted only of a draught of milk, or a leg of rabbit; he ate them and requited equally for them. However, he did not eat of that which was offered to him as legal alms. He did not consider himself too great to answer the (ordinary) people and the poor. He became angry for God and not for his own sake. He exacted the truth even though it brought harm to him and his Companions.

The Prophet, while fighting certain polytheists, was offered the help of other polytheists. However he replied: "I do not seek assistance in conquest from a polytheist." Even though he was with few men and in need of anyone who could increase his numbers.

One of the most virtuous and best of his Companions was found murdered amongst the Jews, but the Prophet did not hasten against them nor did he exceed the course of justice. Rather he accepted no more than the blood price of a hundred female camels although his Companions needed a single male camel with which they would be strengthened.

Because of hunger he at times tightened a stone around his stomach. He often ate what was at hand, did not reject what was available, and did not refrain from lawful food. If there was available a date without bread, he ate it, if there was roast meat, he ate it, if there was wheat or barley bread, he ate it, if there was sweets or honey, he ate it, if there was milk without bread he was content with it, if there was a melon or fresh dates, he ate it.

He did not eat reclining nor from a footed tray. He used his sole as a napkin. Until the time of his death, he did not dislike to eat wheat bread three days in succession as a sign that one (should) choose neither poverty nor avarice.

He attended feasts, visited the sick, attended funerals, and walked alone without a guard amongst his enemies.

He was the humblest of men, the most silent without being insolent,

and the most eloquent without being lengthy. He had the most joyful countenance, none of the affairs of the world awing him.

The Prophet wore what was at hand, at times a cloak covering the whole body, at times a striped cloth garment of Yemen, at times a gown of wool. He wore any permissible garment which was available. His signet was of silver which he sometimes wore on the little finger of his right hand, and sometimes on the left hand.

He mounted his servant and others behind him on the same beast. He rode whatever was possible for him. At different times he rode a horse, a male camel, a gray she mule, an ass, at times he walked foot, barefoot without a cloak, turban or cap.

He visited the sick in the farthest section of the city. He loved perfumes and disliked foul odors. He sat and ate with the poor. He showed regard to the people of virtue for their character and was intimate with the people of rank because of their piety. He did good for his kindred without preferring them to the one who was more virtuous than they. He did not tyrannize anyone and accepted the excuse of him who begged his pardon.

He jested but only spoke the truth. He laughed without bursting out into laughter. He witnessed the permitted games and did not disapprove of them. He raced sportingly with his family. Voices were raised against him, but he was patient.

His milch camels and sheep nourished him and his family with their milk. He did not eat better food nor wear better clothes than his male and female slave. A moment did not pass without his doing an action for God or (doing) that which was indispensable for the soundness of his soul. He went to the garden of his Companions. He did not despise a poor man for his poverty and misfortune, nor did he fear a king because of his power; rather he urged them equally to God.

God combined in him virtuous conduct and perfect rule of people, though he was untaught, unable to read or write, grew up poor amongst

the shepherds in the land of ignorance and desert, and was an orphan without father and mother. God taught him all the fine qualities of character, the praiseworthy paths, the reports of the first and the last affairs, and those matters through which there is (obtained) salvation and reward in the future life and happiness and reward in the world. God taught him to cleave to that which is obligatory and to forsake the useless.

May God direct us to obey Mohammad in his commands and to imitate him in his actions. Amen, O Lord of the Worlds.

Another Summary of his Manner and Character

Of that which Abou l-Bakhtari related, they said that the Messenger of God did not insult a Muslim, but that he atoned for this and bestowed mercy. Moreover, he never cursed either a woman or a slave. While he was waging war it was said to him: "Would that you curse them (the enemy) O Messenger of God!" To which he responded: "I was sent to forgive not as a curser." Whenever he was asked to wish evil against anyone whether he was a Muslim, a disbeliever, a man of the common people, or a man of worth, he turned from wishing him evil to blessing him.

The Messenger of God never struck anyone except for the sake of God, nor did he ever revenge himself for what was done to him except when the sanctity of God was violated. He never chose between two matters but he chose the easier, not however, when there was a sin in this choice, or that which would result in the forsaking of kindred - Mohammad being furthest removed from that.

No person, whether he was free born, male or female, came to the Prophet, but that he supported him in his need. Anas ibn Malik said: "By Him Who sent him with the Truth, Mohammad never said to me in regard to anything what he disapproved; 'Why did you do it?' Moreover, his wives did not rebuke me but that he said: 'Let it be,' it was written in a book and fated."

They said that the Messenger of God did not regard a bed as something amiss; for if they spread out a bed for him, he reclined upon it; if not; he reclined on the earth.

God had already described him in the Torah before He sent him, in the first generation, saying: "Mohammad is the Messenger of God, he is My chosen servant. He is neither harsh, coarse nor clamorous in the market places. He does not reward evil with evil, but he forgives and examines the affair. He was born in Makkah, and his emigration was to Madinah. His kingdom is in Syria. He and those with him clothe themselves with a waistband wrapper. God called him for the Qur'an and firm. He washes his extremities." He is also thus described in the New Testament.

It was his nature to be the first to extend greetings to whoever he met. He was patient with anyone who asked him for help, to the point that he was the one dismissed. While hand shaking, the Prophet was never the first one to release his hand. When he met one of his Companions he was the first to commence handshaking; he then took his hand and clasped it, strengthening his grasp over his hand.

The Prophet did not rise or sit without mentioning God. No one sat in his company while he was praying but that he shortened his prayer and came forth to him and said: "Have you a need?" After satisfying his need, the Prophet returned to his prayer.

The Messenger of God sat most of the time with his feet together, grasping them like a cloth which is used as a support. His sitting place could not be distinguished from that of his Companions because he sat in the last row of those assembled. He never was seen stretching his legs before his Companions, lest he put anyone in a strait position the exception was when there was ample space in which there was no narrowness. Most of the time the Prophet sat facing in the direction of Makkah.

He used to show regard to his visitor to the point of often spreading his garment and seating upon it him who was neither a relative nor a foster brother. He preferred his guest (over himself) by (offering) the cushion on which he reclined; and if he refused, the Prophet urged him until he did accept it.

No one chose the Prophet as a friend, but that the Prophet regarded him as the most noble of men. He shared his attention with all his guests.

Moreover he sat, listened, conversed, acted gracefully, directed himself to his guest, his company being, in spite of all that, modest, humble and sincere. God said: "It was by God's Mercy that you were kind to them, had you been harsh and hard of heart, they would have dispersed from around you..." (Surah 3 verse 159)

He called his Companions by their surnames (kunya) so as to honour and conciliate them. He surnamed whoever did not have a surname and called him by it. The Prophet also surnamed the women who did not have children. He surnamed the young boys so softening their hearts.

Of all men he was the least angry and the readiest to be pleased. He was the most merciful, beneficial, and useful of men towards his fellow men.

No noise was raised in his company. When he arose he said: "God be praised, O God, I testify praising You that there is no god but You; I ask pardon and repent to You." Then he said: "Gabriel - may God bless him - taught me this."

The Account of his Speech and Laughter

Of all men the Prophet had the most eloquent diction and the most pleasant speech. He said: "I am the most eloquent of the Arabs." He also said that the people of Paradise speak the dialect of Mohammad. His speech was exiguous and compliant. When he spoke he was not a bab-bler. His speech was like a string of (matched) gems. Aisha said: "He did not construct his speech the way you do; he spoke little, and you speak a great deal." They said that of all men the Prophet's speech expressed all that he wanted to say. He used to speak comprehensively and concisely, neither exceeding nor falling short (from his purpose). His sentences followed each other and were cohesive, so that his listener heard and understood him.

He had a powerful and most melodious voice. He was long silent, and did not speak without necessity. He did not say that which was forbidden to say. He only spoke the truth whether he was pleased or prone to anger. He avoided whoever spoke without eloquence. Moreover he used to express himself metonymically whenever he had to say anything which he loathed expressing.

When he was silent, his Companions spoke. One did not argue in his presence. He warned by exhortation and by advice. The Prophet said: "Do not refute the Qur'an by comparing one part by another, for the Qur'an was sent down in various ways."

He was the most smiling and laughing of men in the presence of his Companions, admiring what they said, and mingling with them. He often laughed so that his molar teeth showed. The laughter of his Companions in his presence, in imitation of him and as a sign of their regard for him, was a smile.

They said: "One day an Arab Bedouin came to the Prophet while his Companions were unaware as to his frame of mind; and (the Bedouin) desired to ask the Prophet something. At this his Companions said: "No,

do not ask him, O Bedouin, for we do not know his frame of mind.” The Bedouin answered: “Let me! I swear by Him Who sent Mohammad as a Prophet that I shall not leave until he smiles.” Then he said: “O Messenger of God, it has reached us that the Anointed, meaning the anti-Christ, has brought the people who were dying of hunger a bowl of soup. Do you think, you who are dearer to me than my father and mother, that I should desist from his soup, because of chastity and purity so that I die from emaciation, or do you think that I should take his soup so that when I am satiated I will believe in God and deny the anti-Christ.” At this the Messenger of God laughed until his molar teeth showed, and said: “No, but God will reward you with that with which he rewards the Believers.”

They said he was the most smiling and agreeable of men except when a Revelation (of the Qur’an) was revealed to him, when he mentioned the hour of Resurrection, and when he preached a sermon. When he rejoiced and was pleased, he was the most pleased of men. If he preached, he preached vigorously; if he were angered, being angered only for the sake of God, nothing could withstand his anger. Thus he was in all his affairs.

When he undertook an affair, he entrusted the matter to God, renounced his strength and power, and asked for guidance, saying: “O God, show me to the truth, and I will follow it. Show me what is denied, and cause me to shun it. Protect me, lest the truth becomes dubious to me and I follow my inclination without guidance from You. Cause my inclination to act in obedience to You, and may You be pleased with my soundness. Guide me correctly in regard to whatever I am, with Your permission, in doubt as to the truth. Indeed You guide whoever You please to the right path.”

The Account of his Character and Manner in Regard to Food

The Messenger of God ate whatever was available. His most beloved food was that which was ‘ala dafafin, which is defined as the multiplicity of hands upon the food (i.e. partaking food with other people). When the table was set he said: “In the Name of God, render the food favourable and praiseworthy and cause it to have the favour of Paradise.”

While he sat eating, he frequently joined his knees and feet just as he who prays, except that one knee was over the other knee and one foot over the other foot, and said: “I am only a servant; I eat and sit as he does.”

He did not eat very hot food, in regard to which he said: “It is without blessing; indeed God did not feed us fire, therefore cool it.” He ate whatever was within his reach, eating with his three fingers. Sometimes he used a fourth finger but he did not eat with two fingers for he said: “That is the way Satan eats.”

Uthman ibn Affan brought the Prophet a sweetmeat (made of starch, water and honey), and the Prophet said: “What is this, O Abd Allah?” Uthman answered: “You who are dearer to me than my father and mother, we put butter and honey in the stone cooking pot, put it over the fire, and boil it. Then we take the purest part of the wheat when it is milled, and roast it over the butter and honey in the pot. It is then mixed until it is thoroughly cooked and the result is what you see.” At this the Prophet said: “This food is good.”

He ate bread made of unsifted barley and cucumbers with dates and with salt. His favourite fresh fruit were the melon and grapes. He ate the melon with bread and sugar; he often ate it with dates, using his two hands. One day, while he was eating the dates in his right hand and storing the date stones in his left hand, an ewe passed. The Prophet showed her the date stones, and the ewe began eating out of his left hand while he ate with his right hand. When he finished eating, the ewe left.

He frequently ate grapes by putting the bunch in his mouth and drawing forth its stalk bare; (in doing this) the foam on his beard appeared as shining beads. His most frequent food consisted of water and dates. He mixed milk and dates and called them “the two best.”

His favourite food was meat, of which he said: “It is beyond fame; it is the lord of food in this world and in the next; and if I were to ask God to feed it to me everyday, He would do so.” He used to eat soup with meat and marrow. In regard to marrows, which he loved, he said: “It is the tree of my brother Yunus.”

Aisha relates that the Prophet used to say: “O Aisha, when you cook a pottage put in plenty of gourds, for indeed it strengthens the heart of the grieved.” He used to eat meat of hunted birds. However, he did not follow a hunt. Rather he preferred that it be hunted and brought to him; then he ate of it.

When he ate meat, he did not lean over it. Instead he lifted the meat to his mouth and then bit into it with his front teeth. He ate bread and butter, and liked the forearm and shoulder of sheep. Of pottage, he loved gourds; of seasoning he loved vinegar; of dates he loved those of Madinah (al-Ajwa), which he named “The blessed.” Moreover he said: “It (the dates of Madinah) is of Paradise and a remedy for poison and magic.” Of vegetables, he liked the endive, mountain balm, and garden purslane, which is called al-rijla. He disliked the kidneys because of their proximity to the urine. He did not eat seven parts of the sheep, namely the male organ, ovaries, knees, gall bladder, goitre, vulva, and the blood, since he disliked them. He did not eat garlic, onions or leek.

The Prophet never found fault with food. If he was pleased with it, he ate it, if he disliked it, he neglected it; if he discarded it, he did not render it hateful to another person. He disliked the lizard and the spleen but did not declare them forbidden.

He used to wipe clean his fingers saying: “The last portion of food is very much blessed.” Moreover he licked his fingers until they became

red. He did not wipe his hand with a towel until he had licked his fingers one by one, saying that he did not know in which morsel of food was the blessing. When he finished he said: "Praise be to God! God, You are worthy to be praised. You have fed, sated, given drink, and quenched thirst; praise belongs to You, Who cannot be denied, Who is eternally present, and Who is indispensable." When he ate bread and especially meat, he washed his hands vigorously and wiped his face with the excess water.

He used to drink in three portions, invoking God three times. When he finished he praised God three times. He sucked the water and did not gulp it.

The Prophet gave the excess of his food to the one on his right side. If there was someone on his left, who was more illustrious as to rank, he said to the one on his right: "It is the custom that it be given to you, but if you wish I will prefer them?"

He sometimes drank with one breath until he finished. He did not drink from the vessel without separating it from his mouth, rather he avoided doing it.

There was brought to him a vase in which there was honey and milk, and he refused to drink it saying: "There are two draughts in one, and two foods in one vase." Then he said: "I do not forbid it, but I dislike boasting in respect of the excesses of the world and calculating regarding them for tomorrow, rather I love humility. For indeed, whoever is humble before God, God will extol him."

In his house he was more modest than his servants. He did not ask them for food, nor did he importune them with requests for food. If they fed him, he ate. He ate whatever they fed him, and drank whatever they gave him to drink. He often rose and took that which he ate and drank. (i.e. he served himself).

The Account of his Character and Manner in Regard to Dress

The Messenger of God used to wear whatever was at hand: e.g. a wrapper (izar), an outer wrapping garment (rida), a long shirt gown (qamis), an upper gown with full sleeves (jubba), or other garments. He used to admire green garments. He wore white garments most frequently, saying: "Wear them while you are living and shroud yourself in them when you die." The Prophet wore a padded tunic (qaba) for battle and for other occasions.

He had a tunic (qaba) of fine silk brocade which was very becoming on him because of his white complexion. All of his garments were tucked up above his ankles; his waist wrapper over them (his garments) reached to the middle of his shank. His long shirt gown (qamis) was fastened by buttons, which he often unfastened during prayer and on other occasions. He had a saffron dyed cloak (milhafa) in which, wearing nothing else, he led the prayer. He sometimes wore a single piece garment (kisa) wearing nothing else. He had a padded garment (kisa mullabad) which he used to wear saying: "I am only a slave. I dress as the slave dresses." He had two special garments for Friday prayer, excluding his other garments which he wore otherwise.

On occasion he wore only the waist wrapper (izar), tying the two ends between his shoulder blades; and so dressed, he led the people in funeral prayer. Sometimes he prayed in his house wearing the single waist wrapper, tying its two ends crosswise. Moreover he wore that particular garment on the day in which he had sexual relations. The Prophet sometimes prayed during the night in a waist wrapper, wrapping himself with the end part of the garment, which was in his reach, and laying the remainder over his wife.

The Prophet gave away a black single piece garment (*kisa*). At this Umm Salama said: "You who are dearer to me than my father and moth-

er, what happened to that black garment?" The Prophet answered: "I clothed someone with it." Then she said: "I never saw anything which was more becoming than your whiteness against its blackness."

Anas ibn Malik said: "I sometimes saw him lead us in prayer; his back (was) in a cloak the two ends of which he tied in a knot." He used to wear a ring on his finger, and sometimes he went out with a string tied to his ring, thereby to remind himself of things. The Prophet used to put a seal on letters saying: "A seal on a letter is better than suspicion." He used to wear the cap (qalanis) beneath his turban (imama) and without a turban. He sometimes removed his cap from his head and making it a covering before him prayed towards it. At times, when he had no turban, he tied a black kerchief over his head and forehead. The Prophet had a turban called al-Sahab (the cloud) which he received from Ali. At times Ali went out wearing it, and the Prophet said: "Ali comes to you in a cloud."

When he dressed, he dressed from his right side saying: "Praise be to God Who clothed me with that which I conceal my nakedness and with which I adorn myself amongst the people." When he took off his clothing, he removed it from the left side. If the Prophet put on a new garment, he gave his shabby garment to a poor man and said: "There is not a Muslim who clothes another Muslim with his worn out clothes, doing so for the sake of God, but that he (the giver) partakes in the security, refuge and benefit of God Almighty, whilst living or dead."

He had a mat (bed) of skins, which was stuffed with palm fibers; its length was approximately two cubits, and its width was approximately a cubit and a span. He had a wide outer garment (aba'), which was spread out for him wherever it was carried and which he folded into layers. The Prophet slept on the ground with nothing else beneath him.

It was the Prophet's habit to name his beasts of burden, his weapons and his belongings. The name of his banner was al-Iqab (the eagle); the name of his sword with which he faced battle was dhu' l-Faqar (possessor of vertebrae). He had a sword which was called al-Midham

(the cutting sword), another called al-Rusub (the steady) and another called al-Qadib (the sharp). The handle of his sword was adorned with silver. The Prophet used to wear a belt made of skins in which were three rings of silver. The name of his bow was al-Katum (the unbroken), and the name of his quivers were al-Kafur (camphor). The name of his female camel was al-Qaswa (the clipped ear); it is she whom he called al-Adba (the slit ear). The name of his she-mule was Duldul (the hedgehog); the name of his ass was Ya'fur (gazelle); the name of the ewe whose milk he drank was Ina' (choice).

The Prophet had a vessel for ablutions made of baked clay from which he washed and drank. The people sent to him young children who had just reached the age of understanding. They visited the Messenger of God and did not leave him. When they found water in the vessel they drank from it wiped their faces and bodies with the water. In doing so they desired the blessing (therein) for themselves.

The Account of his Pardoning, Notwithstanding his Power Not to Pardon

The Messenger of God was the most forbearing of men and most desirous of pardoning, notwithstanding his power not to. When he divided a necklace of gold and silver amongst his Companions there arose a Bedouin who said: "O Mohammad, by God, indeed, He commanded that you act justly; whereas I do not see you act thus." At which the Prophet said: "Woe to you; who will act equitably to you after me?" When the Bedouin turned away, the Prophet said: "Bring him back to me gently."

Jabir ibn Abd Allah related that the Messenger of God, in a wet garment, was giving people silver on the Day of Khaybar (Battle 7A.H.) At this a man said to him: "O Messenger of God, act justly!" Then the Messenger of God said: "Woe to you; who will act justly if I do not act justly? When Umar ibn al-Kattab rose and said: "Shall I not strike his neck, for indeed he is a hypocrite?" To which the Messenger of God answered: "God forbid, that the people should relate that I kill my Companions!"

The Messenger of God was in battle, and there was observed a carelessness amongst the Muslims, so that a man advanced against the Messenger of God with a sword saying: "Who will defend you against me?" The Prophet said: "God." And the sword fell from his hand. Seizing the sword the Prophet said: "Who will defend you against me?" And the man replied: "Be quick about it." To which the Prophet said: "Say, I testify that there is no god but God and that I am the Messenger of God!" The man replied: "No, I only say that I will not fight you, nor will I be with you, nor will I be with a people who will fight you." At this the Prophet released him. When the Prophet came back to his Companions, he said: "I come to you from the presence of the best of men."

Anas ibn Malik related that a Jewish woman brought the Prophet a poisoned ewe in order for him to eat from it. She was then brought to the Prophet who asked her with regard to the matter. She said: "I desired to kill you," then the Prophet said: "God did not empower you over that." At this they asked: "Shall we not kill her?" And he said: "No."

A certain Jew bewitched the Prophet, and Gabriel informed him of that. At this he drew forth (the charm) and untied the knots so that the sorcery was removed. However, the Prophet did not mention or reveal this matter to the Jew.

Ali said: "The Messenger of God sent for me, al-Zubayr (ibn al-Awwam) and Miqdad (ibn Amr al-Aswad) and said: "Go until you come to Raudat Khakh, where you will find a woman whose husband has left her. In her possession there is a letter. Take it from her." We went until we reached Raudat Khakh and we said (to the woman): 'Bring forth the letter.' to which she replied: 'I have no letter.' Then we said: 'Bring forth the letter or we will take off your garments.' At this she brought out the letter from her plaited hair. When we brought the letter to the Prophet, there was contained therein a missive of Hatib ibn Abi Balta'a to certain polytheists in Makkah, which informed them of one of the affairs of the Prophet. Then the Prophet said to him: 'O Hatib, what is this?' to which he replied, 'O Messenger of God, do not hasten against me. Indeed I was

a man who was adopted amongst my people, and there are amongst the refugees with you those who have relatives in Makkah who protect their families. I desired since I was unrelated to them, to choose amongst them a hand with which my kindred would be protected. However, I did not do that out of unbelief, or preferring unbelief after being Muslim, or out of apostasy.’ At this Umar ibn Khattab said: ‘Let me kill the hypocrite.’ The Prophet replied: ‘Indeed he was at Badr, and how do you know, perhaps God examined the people of Badr and said: ‘Do what you will, I have already forgiven you.’”

The Messenger of God distributed allotments, and one of the Ansar said: “This is a distribution by means of which the pleasure of God is not intended.” When this was mentioned to the Prophet, his face reddened and he said: “God have mercy, my brother Moses had suffered more than this, and he was patient.” The Prophet used to say: “Let no one of you inform me of anything (unfavourable) regarding one of my Companions, for I like to go out to you with a sound heart.”

The Account of his Averting his Gaze from Whatever he Disliked

The Messenger of God had thin skin and was delicate internally and externally, so that his anger and his pleasure were visible in his face. When he became very excited, he touched his noble beard frequently. He did not talk with anyone in regard to what he disliked. When he was visited by a person who was wearing a yellow dye, which he disliked, he did not say anything to him until he left. Then he said to certain of the people: “Would you tell this man to give up this (yellow dye).” When a Bedouin urinated in the mosque in his presence, and his Companions intended to prevent him, the Prophet said: “Do not stop him.” Then the Messenger of God said to him: “These mosques are not suited to serve as places of urination, excretion or of any foul matter.” In certain accounts it is stated: “Draw people close and do not scare them away.”

One day a Bedouin came to the Prophet and asked him for something. The Prophet gave it to him and said: “Have I done well by you?” To

which the Bedouin answered: “No, nor have you acted decently.” Upon this reply the Muslims became angered and rose against the Bedouin. At this point, however, the Prophet advised them to desist. Later, the Prophet rose and went to his lodging and sent a further amount to the Bedouin and said to him: “Have I done well by you?” To which the Bedouin answered: “Yes, may God reward you with well being of family and tribe.” In reply, the Prophet said to him: “You have made a certain statement and something of that has remained in the minds of my Companions. So would you like to say before them what you said before me, in order that they would remove from their chests (hearts) what they have against you.” At which the Bedouin answered: “Yes.” When it was dusk of the next day, the Bedouin came, and the Prophet said: “Indeed this Bedouin said what he said, and we increased his amount so that he asserted that he was pleased. Is that so?” And the Bedouin answered: “Yes, my God reward you with well being of family and tribe.” Then the Prophet said: “Indeed the narrative of myself and this Bedouin is as the narrative of a man who had a female camel which ran away. The people followed her (a factor) which only caused her to be more frightened. Then the owner of the camel called the people and said to them: ‘Leave the camel alone, for indeed I am gentle with her and have more understanding.’ He turned to the camel, took some sweepings for her, and returned her gently until she kneeled. Then he saddled her and sat upon her. Now, indeed if I forsook you when the Bedouin said what he said, and you had killed him, he would have entered the Fire.”

The Account of his Munificence and his Liberality

The Prophet was the most generous and liberal of men. In the month of Ramadan he was like the “Sent Wind,” (in Surah 77 verse 1) withholding nothing. Ali, when he described the Prophet, used to say: “Of all men, he was the most liberal handed, the most open hearted, the most truthful, the most fulfilling of promises, the gentlest of temper, and the most noble towards kindred. Whoever saw him unexpectedly, was awed

by him, and whoever was his intimate, loved him.” Describing him, Ali said: “I did not see his likeness before or after him.” The Prophet was never asked for anything for Islam but he gave it. When a man came to the Prophet asking for something. The Prophet gave him a flock which closed the breach between two mountains. Then the man returned to his people and said: “Accept Islam, for Mohammad gives the gift of one who does not fear poverty.” The Prophet never said: “No.” When asked for something. Having put on the earth ninety thousand dirhams which were brought to him, he rose and divided it, not refusing anyone who asked him until there was no longer any to distribute.

A man came and asked him for something, the Prophet having nothing with him, said: “Buy, making me responsible, and when we will have something we will pay for it.” At which *Umar ibn al-Khattab* said: “O Messenger of God, God did not impose upon you what you cannot do.” This answer having displeased the Prophet, the man said: “Spend graciously, and do not fear from God a diminution.” The Prophet then smiled and the joy was noticeable on his face.

When he returned from Hunayn, the Arabs came to him and persisted in asking until they compelled him to climb up a tree, his cloak having been snatched from him. Then the Messenger of God stood up and said: “Give me my cloak. If I had camels equal to the number of these trees, I would divide them amongst you; moreover you will not find me avaricious, a liar or a coward.”

An Account of his Bravery

The Prophet was the most gallant and the bravest of men. Ali said: “You have indeed seen me at Badr at the time when we were taking refuge in the Prophet of God, who was the closest to the enemy. The Prophet was on that day the most courageous of men.” Ali also said: “When there was intense adversity, and the people encountered each other, we preserved ourselves by the Messenger of God, there being no one closer to the enemy than he.”

It is said that the Prophet spoke little. But when he ordered the people to fight, he tucked up his garments and went quickly. He was the bravest of men. The courageous person was the one who was close to the Prophet in battle, because of the Prophet's proximity to the enemy. Imran ibn al-Husayn said: "The Messenger of God did not come upon a squadron without being the first to strike." They said that he was very courageous. When the polytheists approached him, he alighted from his male camel and said: "I am the Prophet, there is no falsehood in what I say. I am the grandson of Abd al-Muttalib." On that day there was not seen anyone who was more vehement than he.

An Account of his Modesty

The Prophet was the most modest of men regarding his noble origin. Ibn Amar said: "I saw him throw stones riding on a gray camel; he did not strike, nor whip, nor did he say 'move yourselves!' He rode on an ass on which there was packed a hairy cloth; the Prophet, notwithstanding that, asked one to ride behind him. The Prophet used to visit the sick, follow the funeral bier, answer the call of the slave, and patch his shoes and garments. In his house he did the family duties together with the rest of the family. His Companions did not rise for him because they knew he disliked that.

When he passed young boys, he greeted them. When a man frightened by his reverential fear of the Prophet was brought to him, the Prophet said to him: "Be at rest, I am not a king, I am only the son of a woman of Quraish, who eats dried meat."

He sat among his Companions conversing with them, as if he were one of them. When a stranger came, not knowing which one of them was the Prophet, he asked concerning him until the Companions asked the Prophet to sit in a way in which the stranger could distinguish him from the rest. Later he sat on a mud bench which they had built for him.

Aisha said to the Prophet: "Eat, may God make me your ransom, reclining, it is easier for you." The Prophet replied, inclining his head until

his forehead almost touched the ground: "On the contrary, I eat as the slave eats, sit as the slave sits." Until he died the Prophet did not eat off a tray, from a saucer or from a bowl.

No one of his companions called him but that he answered: "At your service." When he sat with the people, if they spoke regarding the future world, he participated with them, if they spoke regarding food and drinks, he did likewise, if they spoke regarding worldly matters he did likewise, gently and modestly. They used to recite poetry for a period of time before him and used to mention matters which occurred in the "State of Ignorance". The Prophet smiled when they laughed; and he did not restrain them except from that which was sinful.

The Account of his External Manner and his Countenance

There is a description of the Messenger of God wherein he is described as not being excessively short or tall. Rather he was of middling stature, when he walked by himself, however, there was not a tall person who walked with him, but that the Prophet appeared as tall as he. Very often two tall men flanked him, and he appeared as tall as they; but when they left him, they were tall and the Prophet again appeared to be of middle stature. The Prophet said: "The best (men) were of moderate stature."

His complexion was azhar, neither brown nor very white. As for the term azhar, it is defined as pure white unmixed with red or yellow or any other colour. Moreover the Prophet's uncle Abou Talib described him saying: "White, with his face the clouds were asked for rain. A feeder of the orphan, a protection for the widow."

Some described him as being of a reddish hue; and they explained, however, that only those parts which were exposed to the wind and sun, such as the face and neck, were a reddish colour. However the colour of the parts of his body which were not so exposed were pure azhar, unmixed with any red tint.

His beads of sweat on his face were like pearls; they were more fra-

grant than the most pungent musk. As for his hair, he had beautiful curly hair, which was neither lank nor short and woolly. When he combed his hair, it appeared as streaks of sand. It is said that his hair touched his shoulders; whereas, most of the reports state that his hair reached the lobe of his ear. The Prophet used to make four plaits with each ear exposed between two plaits. He sometimes put his hair over his ears, so that the locks of hair on his temples appeared to be shining. The total number of white hair on his head and his beard did not exceed seventeen.

The Prophet was the most handsome and luminous of men. No one described him but that he likened him to the moon on the night of Badr. His anger and pleasure were seen in his face because of the purity of his skin. They said that he was as his friend Abou Bakr al-Siddiq described him when he said: "Loyal, pure, calling to good, as the moonlight of Badr, darkness was removed from him."

The Prophet had a wide forehead and very long arched eyebrows. The brightness (of the gap) between his two eyebrows was as if the space was made of pure silver. His eyes were very wide, black of pupil, and had a reddish tint. He had long eyelashes so that one was almost dubious of their length. The upper part of his nose was hooked i.e. his nose was not humped. There was a space between his teeth, i.e. they were separated; and when he showed his teeth while laughing they flashed like lightning.

He had the most beautiful lips and the most delicate closed mouth of all the servants of God. He had broad even cheeks, he was not long or round faced. He had a thick beard which he let grow. He clipped his mustache. He had the most beautiful neck of all the servants of God - a neck that was neither long nor short. However, that part of his neck which was exposed to the sun and wind was like a kettle of silver mixed with gold, glistening because of the whiteness of the silver and redness of the gold.

The Prophet had a broad chest, and his skin did not overlap. His chest was like a mirror in its evenness and the moon in its whiteness, Between his navel and upper chest there was a single hair which was stretched like a sword, there being no other hair on his chest or stomach. He had three

belly folds; one of them was covered by the waist band, while the other two were visible. He had big hairy shoulders; his chief bones were well covered with flesh, that is, for example his shoulders, elbows and hips. He had a wide back; between his shoulder blades there was the 'seal of prophecy', which was adjacent to his right shoulder. In this place there was a black mole inclining toward yellow, around it were continuous hairs, as if they were from the mane of a horse.

He was bulky of upper arm and forearm, and the bones of the forearm, i.e. his radius and ulna were long. He was broad of palm and long of extremities. His fingers were as rods of silver. His palm was softer than silk, it was (his palm) as the perfumed hand of a perfumer, whether he did or did not perfume it. If someone shook his hand, when the night fell the odor was still present. The Prophet put his hand on a boy's head, and this boy was distinguishable from his fellows by the odor of his head.

The Prophet was bulky of those parts of his body which are beneath the waist wrapper, i.e. of thigh and shank. He was well proportioned as regards fat. He became stout at the end of his life, but his flesh was almost as compact as in his former age, not having injured it.

As regards his walk, it was as though he fell off a rocky place or walked down a declivity. He walked inclined and walked the huwayna without swaggering. The huwayna is defined as bringing one's footsteps close together.

The Prophet used to say: "I most resemble Adam, and my father Ibrahim most resembled me in external appearance and moral nature." He also used to say: "Before my Lord I have ten names: Mohammad, Ahmad, the Abolisher through whom God abolishes disbelief, the Last, there being no one after him; the Assembler, God assembles them after my step; I am the Messenger of Mercy, the Messenger of Repentance, the Messenger of war, the Follower, I follow all the people (Prophets); I am al-Qutham." Abou l-Bakhtari said that al-Qutham is defined as the complete perfect person. God knows whether this is correct.

The Account of his Miracles and Signs Which Prove his Truth

Know that if one witnessed the Prophet's qualities and heard the reports which deal with his character, actions, qualities, habits, natural disposition, his ruling the various classes of people, his guiding their organisation, his acquaintance with the various classes of people, leading them to obey him, together with what is related of his wondrous answers in regard to perplexing questions, his wondrous manner of maintaining the well being of people, his excellent indications in regard to the details of the outer law, its most elementary subtleties being beyond the grasp of the legists and the wise men although it took their entire lifetimes, there could not remain for him the slightest doubt or suspicion that all this was not acquired by human means. Rather all this cannot be conceived except by seeking heavenly help and divine power, nor could all this be conceived by a liar or a confused person. Moreover the Prophet's good qualities and his virtues were absolute testimony of his truth, so much so that when a true born Arab saw him he said: "By God, this is not the face of a liar." If his good qualities alone were testimony to this truth, how much more so is his truth validated by the testimony of one who witnessed his character and studied his qualities in all his dealings!

We, however, only present some aspects of his character in order that the fine quality of his character may become known, and in order that one becomes mindful of his truth, of his high rank, and his great place with God Almighty. Moreover God bestowed all that upon him, even though he was untaught, did not occupy himself with learning, did not examine books, did not set out in search of learning, did not cease being an orphan, and was weak and regarded as weak amongst the chiefs of the Arabs. Therefore from where did he obtain the fine qualities of character and manner, the knowledge of the workings of jurisprudence, for example, beside the other sciences, not to mention his true knowledge of God, His angels and His Books, the special properties of prophecy, were it not by Revelation? From where can the human faculty do this of its own vo-

lition? Furthermore, if only these matters were attributed to Mohammad, it would be enough. Whereas there were revealed his signs and miracles, which the scholar cannot doubt.

We will mention of their totality those signs and miracles which the reports have spread far and wide and which are contained in the 'sound books', as an indication of their great quantity, without, however, going into the detailed narrative. God Almighty changed the customary course of events through the agency of Mohammad peace and prayers be upon him, more than once.

*Al-Ghazali's
Ihya' Ulum al-Din*

**REVITALISATION OF THE
SCIENCES OF RELIGION**

(abridged by Abd el Salam Haroun)

Revised and Translated

by

Dr Ahmad A Zidan

Vol. 2

*The Quarter on the
Destructive
Matters of Life*

The First Book

On the Wonders of the Heart

All Praise be to God, Who has disposed all matters through His arrangement of them, Who has equitably composed His creation and given it excellent form, Who has adorned the aspect of man by granting him good stature and proportion, safeguarding him from increase and decline in his aspect and measurements; Who has assigned the improvement of character to the effort and labour of His servants, urging them to it by inspiring in them fear and tradition. For the elect among them has He made this improvement easy by His providence and facilitation, blessing them with the easing of the difficulties and hardships which lie therein.

Peace and prayers be upon Mohammad (peace and prayers be upon him), His servant and Messenger, loved one and chosen one, who was His bearer of glad tidings and His warner.

An Exposition on the Meaning of Soul (nafs), Spirit (ruh), Heart (qalb) and Intellect (aql)

There are two senses in which each of these terms are used:

I. Soul (*nafs*)

- (i) The principle which unites the irascible and appetitive faculties, the soul which constantly enjoins evil (*al-nafs al-ammara bi'l-su*). This is the normal Sufi usage of the term.
- (ii) Man's soul and essence (*dhat*), referred to as *ammara bi'l-su*, *lau'wama*, or *mutma'inna*, depending on its state in relation to God.

II Spirit (*ruh*)

- (i) A subtle body originating in the cavity of the physical heart, which spreads through the body via the arteries, just as light from a lantern fills a room.

- (ii) The subtle thing which knows and perceives, referred to by God in the verse : “And they question you concerning the spirit, say, “The spirit is the concern of my Lord...” (Surah 17 verse 85)

III Heart (*qalb*)

- (i) The pine shaped piece of flesh in the body, which contains a cavity filled with blood, which is the locus of the Spirit.
- (ii) In the *Ihya*, however, the word is employed in its physical sense: a spiritual, divine subtlety (*latifa*) connected to the physical heart, which is the reality of man, which perceives, knows and intuit.

IV Intelligence (*aql*)

- (i) Knowledge.
- (ii) The second definition of ‘heart’ above.

The above eight can be reduced to five principles; the corporal heart, the corporal spirit, the ‘soul which constantly enjoins evil’, knowledge, and the subtle thing which perceives and knows (*qalb ii*). This fifth principle incorporates the other four.

An Exposition on the Soldiers of the Heart

The heart has two types of soldiers. One type is visible, comprising the bodily members which follow the instructions of the heart. The other is invisible, comprising ideas and perceptions. The ‘soldiers’ can also be divided according to three other categories: (i) *irada* (the will), which instigates, such as appetitive (*shahawa*) and anger (*ghadab*); (ii) *qudra* (power), which includes sinews and muscles, which are the actual means by which the members are made to move: (iii) *al-ilm wa’l-idrak* (knowledge and perception, which provide information acquired through the five external senses of hearing, sight, smell, taste and touch, and also the five internal senses located in the brain, which are imagination (*takhayyul*), the *sensus communis* (*hiss mushtarak*) (which coordinates information received through the various faculties), thought (*tafakkur*), remembrance (*tadhakkur*), and memory (*hifz*).

An Exposition on some Examples of the Heart and its Internal Soldiers

The armies of the appetite and irascible faculties may be submissive to the spirit, thereby assisting it towards salvation, or rebellious, thus driving it to perdition. To discipline and make use of these armies it must call on other soldiers, which are knowledge, wisdom and thought.

Example One. The spirit in the body is like a king in a city. The members and capacities are like craftsmen and labourers. The intellect is like a sincere, wise minister, while anger is like a chief of police, who controls the appetite, which in turn is a base slave who brings food and supplies to the city. Although the slave presents himself as a sincere adviser, he constantly opposes the minister: he is in reality a saboteur. The city prospers when, thanks to the efforts of the chief of police, the slave is rehabilitated, and is forced to submit to the minister.

Example Two. The body is like a city and the percipient intellect is like a king; the exterior and interior senses are the king's soldiers, while the members are his subjects. The 'soul which constantly enjoins evil' is the enemy, determined to overmaster the king and subvert the population. The consequent warfare is 'the greater jihad'.

Example Three. The intellect is like a horse man on a hunt. His appetite is like a horse, and his anger, his dog. If he is skilled, his horse well trained (a symbol for mastery of the desire for food and sex), and his dog disciplined, he will be successful in the chase.

An Exposition on the Special Property of Man's Heart

Man is distinguished from the animals in that he not only possesses desire, anger and senses-perception, but also the divine gift of the intellect: knowledge, and the will to act upon it in a way which contradicts the appetite. In youth, reason is only a potential in the primordial disposition (*fītra*), which is realised upon the learning of first principles, and then through experience. Acquisition of the highest knowledge - of God - which is of innumerable degrees, comes about either through learning, or

directly through divine inspiration (*ilham*). Man can prepare his heart for this inspiration by purifying it.

An Exposition on the Overall Attributes of the Heart, and Examples of it

Four qualities exist in every heart: predatory (*sabu'iya*), animal (*bahimiya*), satanic (*shaytaniya*) and divine (*rabbaniya*). The first of these is the faculty of anger, the second is appetite for food, sex and so on, the third is the faculty which justifies the turning of the capacity of discernment to evil ends, while the fourth, being in part a divine mystery, must use its intelligence and insight to uncover the wiles of the satanic quality, and to submit the appetite to the irascible faculty. When man achieves this, an equilibrium, or justice, results. The implications of this for ethics are spelt out: the predatory quality engenders such vices as wastefulness, boasting, pride, and lust for oppression; the animal quality produces hypocrisy, slander, greed, and shamelessness; the satanic quality, having successfully encouraged the soul to obey the first two, produces guile, deceit, fraud and so on. But should the divine element triumph, and subdue all of these, then the virtues will appear. When man controls his predatory quality and sets it within its proper limits, he acquires such virtues as courage, generosity, self control, patience, forgiveness and dignity. When the animal faculty is controlled, virtues such as chastity, contentment, modesty and helpfulness ensue.

The heart is a mirror which may be polished by struggling against the appetites, and working to acquire good characters traits, and holding to actions such as the remembrance of God, 'until the true nature of that matter which is sought in religion is revealed in it'. Bad influences, by contrast, are like smoke which clouds over the heart's mirror until it is entirely veiled from God, which is the 'heart's rust' mentioned in the Qur'an.

An Exposition on the Heart's Similitude, particularly in Relation to Knowledge

The heart, as the seat of knowledge, is like a mirror which reflects the specific nature of things. Intelligibles are forms reflected in it, while the intelligence is its actual reflection in the mirror.

Although man's heart alone is capable of knowing all realities, various obstacles may impede this: (i) The mirror may be unfinished due to youth; (ii) It may be veiled by sins; (iii) Worldly distractions may turn it away from God; (iv) It may be tarnished by the imitative acceptance (*taqlid*) of dogma; (v) Ignorance.

There are three levels of knowledge: (i) the faith of the ordinary people (*awamm*), which is to be gained through imitative acceptance from people believed to be truthful; (ii) the faith of the theologians (*mutakallimun*), which contains an element of proof; (iii) the faith of the saints (*siddiqun*), who, through 'witnessing' (*mushahada*), experience God at first hand, and whose knowledge is hence beyond doubt. These three levels can be compared to hearing that a man is in a house, then hearing his voice and hence deducing his presence, and finally, seeing him face to face.

An Exposition on the State of the Heart in relation to the Divisions of Intellectual, Religious, Worldly and Otherworldly Knowledge

The knowledge which may be reflected in the heart are two categories; intellectual and religious. The former are subdivided into necessary and acquired knowledge, while religious knowledge, being that which is learnt through prophets, and without which the heart cannot be perfected, is sub-divided into (i) knowledge received on authority (*taqlid*), and (ii) that granted directly by God to the Prophets and saints.

The intellectual sciences are like foods, while the religious sciences are like medicines. Although some have claimed that the two are incompatible, and have hence renounced religion, they are in fact in harmony.

Apparent discrepancies between them are to be attributed to insufficient knowledge, for both are intricate, and few indeed are the men who have mastered both.

An Exposition on the Difference between Inspiration and Learning, and between the Sufi Method of Unveiling the Truth and that of the Philosophers and Theologians

There is knowledge which appears in the heart only under certain conditions, either through inspiration (for the saints and prophets), or inductive reasoning (for the scholars). The five obstacles mentioned in Exposition Six form a veil between the heart and the Well Preserved Tablet (*al-lawh al-mahfuz*), which is where God has inscribed everything which He has decreed from Creation until the Judgment. This veil may be removed by hand, or by a wind, which causes the heart to behold something of what the Tablet contains. Often this happens during sleep, but it may happen when the seeker is awake, either as a transient 'shaft of lighting', or - but this is exceedingly rare - as a permanent condition. For this reason the Sufis have not been concerned only with book learning, but have instead sought to reach this state where the veil is lifted, by means of self-discipline, the wiping away of vile attributes, the severing of all ties, and earnestly directing themselves to God. As this goal draws near, the seeker should isolate himself for a while, far from all distractions, and recall (*dhikr*) God within himself. If his determination is sincere, collected and strong, gleams of Truth may appear in his heart, and these may then be followed by others of different kinds, coming at increasingly short intervals. The variety of such stations is beyond reckoning, but all are granted after a process of self purification and diligent polishing of the heart.

The philosophers and theologians (*al-nuzzar*) do not deny this way, but they consider it extremely difficult to pursue, since it is rigorous and slow, and may, if pursued to excess, be harmful to the body. Similarly, if the spiritual voyager is not well versed in scholarly learning he may be veiled by a false imagining which he will never be able to shake of.

An Exposition on the Difference between the two Positions shown by a Tangible Example

The heart is like a pool filled either from rivers or from underground springs. The first represent knowledge derived by means of deduction from the evidence of the world, while the second is the inner, spiritual knowledge.

One side of a portico was once decorated by Byzantine craftsmen, while the other was decorated by craftsmen from China. Between the two sides a veil was suspended. The Byzantines painted and carved their side, while the Chinese merely polished their side so that it became a mirror. When the veil was removed, the mirror reflected the work of the Byzantines with added brilliance. The Byzantines, then, resemble the scholars, while the Chinese are like the Sufis.

An Exposition on Religious Texts testifying to the Correctness of the Sufis' Method in Acquiring Knowledge, not by Learning or from the Customary Method

To experience only a small amount of inspiration is to know the validity of this method. But for those who have not attained this, there are numerous proof texts. For instance, the Qur'an has spoken of "Is he whom God has made his chest delight in Islam, so he is in a Light from his Lord?..." (Surah 39 verse 22) And the Prophet used to pray: "O Lord! Give me light in my heart!" Further, the reality of the Sufi method is proved by the experience of dreams in which future events are revealed.

An Exposition on Satan's Mastery of the Heart through Insinuations (waswasa); the Meaning of Insinuation, and the Cause of its Subdual.

It has been seen that the heart is affected by information brought by the five senses, and by internal faculties such as imagination, appetite, anger, and character traits. The most important influence, however, comes from those random thoughts, promptings and ideas which are projected by the devil into the mind, and distract or confuse it; these are

termed *khawatir*. To ward these off, man should engage in remembrance (*dhikr*) of God, and continue with the process of self-discipline and inner purification.

An Exposition detailing Satan's Entrances into the Heart

The heart is like a castle, and a man must guard its entrance against the enemy, who is the devil. The main entrances are: (i) irascibility and desire; (ii) envy and greed; (iii) Eating one's fill, for this increases the other desires, causes illness, and reduces one's receptivity to wisdom and desire for worship; (iv) Love of self adornment, whether in clothes, furnishings or residence; (v) Coveting what others own and control, and hence flattering and deceiving them; (vi) Haste, which according to the Prophet, 'comes from Satan'; (vii) Money, property, and all other kinds of wealth in excess of one's needs, for wealth creates its own concerns which will distract the heart; (viii) Avarice and fear of poverty, which will destroy the heart's serene conviction that God will provide; (ix) Fanatical attachments to schools of thought and sects (*ahwa*), hatred of rival doctrines, and delight in criticizing them; (x) Studying advanced theological doctrines from which one is not prepared, and hence falling into false beliefs about God; (xi) Harboring a low opinion of other Muslims, which leads to self-satisfaction and backbiting.

The heart must be purified of all these evil traits before *dhikr* can be effective; otherwise the *dhikr* will itself be a form of *khawatir* with no real influence. Even when these traits are removed, it is necessary to cure oneself of *ghafla* (heedlessness and distraction). If one does not, one will be like a patient who derives little benefit from a medicine because he takes it when his stomach is full of food.

There are many devils, each with his own name, who cast *khawatir* into the hearts on specific occasions; ritual ablution, the canonical prayer, visiting the marketplace, dealing with one's family and so on. When they appear, they take the form of base animals such as dogs, frogs and pigs.

An Exposition on the Heart's Insinuations, Concerns, Whisperings and Intentions for which Man is taken to Task, and those in which man is Forgiven

The Prophet said: "The People of my community are forgiven the discourse of their souls, in so far as they do not mention it or act upon it." There are four stages between thought and action: (i) an involuntary suggestion; (ii) the inclination of the nature; (iii) reasoned judgment; (iv) determination. The first two involve no moral responsibility, while the second two are to be judged according to the underlying intention.

An Exposition on Whether it is Conceivable that Insinuations should Cease Entirely during the Remembrance of God, or not

The Sufis have given five possible answers to this: (i) Insinuation does not cease entirely; (ii) It still exists, but has not effect on the heart, since the heart is distracted from it by the dhikr, (iii) Its whisperings are heard, but weakly and from afar; (iv) dhikr and waswasa follow each other in quick succession, so that the distinction between them is blurred; (v) The two exist simultaneously in the heart, which has an ability to focus on two activities at once; this is the view of al-Muhasibi. The correct view, however, is that all of these can occur, depending on circumstance.

There are three types of insinuation. (i) The Devil may use an argument which seems to contain some truth, for instance: 'Enjoy yourself now; there is surely time for righteousness in future years'; or 'You pray so much; you must surely be beloved by God'; (ii) He may incite a passion in the soul, which one may or may not know to be sinful; (iii) He may make suggestions which are not sinful, but merely distract the heart, such as reminding him of worldly affairs during the canonical prayer. This is the hardest type to remove; and it was thus that the Prophet said: "Whoever prays two *ra'kas* without his *nafs* speaking to him of any worldly affair, shall have all his former sins forgiven."

An Exposition on the Speed with which the Heart Changes, and a Categorisation of Hearts on the basis of Change and Stability

The heart, being a battleground of angelic and satanic impulses, is like a target struck from all directions, and hence moves and changes rapidly. God has said: "And We turn away their hearts and their eyes..." (Surah 6 verse 110) There are three kinds of hearts in this respect. (i) The pious heart which self-discipline has purified of evil character traits, and which thus receives good suggestions from the higher world. Safe from the insinuations of Satan, it is the heart referred to in God's word: "...indeed in the remembrance of God the heart finds serenity (Surah 13 verse 28). (ii) The sinful heart filled with passion and evil character traits. Here the Devil suggestions are actually supported by the intellect, which has been habituated to following its whims. This may extend to all aspects of the soul, or only express itself in specific weaknesses, such as anger or greed. (iii) Most men, however, have the third kind, where the Devil's whisperings, supported by the nafs, are countered by the voice of faith and the intellect. Victory will be decided by the relative predominance of character traits in the heart.

The Second Book
On the Discipline of the Soul
Disciplining the Soul,
Refining the Character,
And Curing the Sickness of the Heart
Kitab Riyadat Al-nafs
Wa Tahdhib Al-akhlaq
Wa Mu'alajat Amrad Al-qalb

*An Exposition of Merit which is in having Good Character, and a
Condemnation of Bad Character*

God Almighty said to His Prophet and loved one (peace and prayers be upon him), in praise of him, and in order to make manifest His blessing upon him: “And surely you are of a great morality.” (Surah 68 verse 4).

And Aisha (may God be pleased with her) said: “The character of the Messenger of God (peace and prayers be upon him) was the Qur’an.”

A man once asked the Messenger of God about good character, and he recited the statement of the Almighty: “Be pardoning, enjoin what is right and excuse the ignorant.” (Surah 7 verse 199) He then said: “It is that you should seek reconciliation with those who avoid you, give to those who withhold from you, and forgive those who deal with you unjustly.”

And he said: “I was sent only to perfect the noble qualities of character.”

And he said: “The heaviest things to be placed in the Scales shall be the fear of God and good character.”

And he said: “The most beloved of you to me on the Day of Arising, and the ones who shall sit closest to me, will be the best of you in character.”

The Narratives

Luqman the Wise once asked his father: “Father, what is the finest single trait in a man?” “Religion,” he replied. Then he asked: “And what are the finest two traits?” “Religion and wealth,” he said. “And the finest three?” “Religion, wealth and modesty.” And if they should be four?” “Religion, wealth, modesty and good character.” And if they should be five?” And he replied: “Religion, wealth, modesty, good character and generosity.” And if they should be six?” “O my son,” he replied, “When these five traits come together in a man, then he is pious and pure, one of God’s saints, and is quit of Satan.”

Ibn al-Mubarak was once accompanied on a journey by a man of bad character, and treated him with forbearance and politeness. When they parted (Ibn al-Mubarak) wept. Upon being asked why he did so, he replied: “I weep out of compassion for him: I have left him, but his character is still with him, and has not departed from his company.”

Ibn Ata said: “Those who have reached high degrees have done so only through good character.

An Exposition on the True Nature of Good and Bad Character

Know that people have discoursed upon the true nature of good character, and upon what it constitutes, but have in fact treated only the fruit which it bears, and not its reality. They have not even grasped the entirety of its fruit, of which everyone has mentioned that which occurred to him and came to his mind; never have they directed their attention towards providing a definition for it or a discussion of its nature which takes all of its fruits into account in a detailed and comprehensive fashion.

There is, for example, the saying of al-Hasan that ‘Good character is a cheerful face, magnanimity, and doing no harm’.

And al-Wasit has said: “It is that one should not argue with anyone or be argued with by anyone, because of one’s firm knowledge of God Almighty.”

Shah al-Kirmanî said: “It is to do no harm, and to endure harm instead.”

Al-Husayn ibn Mansur (al-Hallaj) said: “It is that you should be unaffected by the harshness of mankind after having beheld the Truth.”

Just as one’s external appearance can never be beautiful when the eyes are beautiful but not the nose, the mouth and the cheek - for all (the features) must be beautiful if one’s outward aspect is to be beautiful also - so too there exist things, four in number, which must all be beautiful if one is to be possessed of a beautiful character, which one will obtain when these four things are settled, balanced, and in the correct proportion to each other. These are the rational faculty, the irascible faculty, the appetitive faculty, and the faculty which effects a just equilibrium between these three things.

The rational faculty is sound and good when it is easily able to discriminate, that is, to distinguish honesty from lies in speech, truth from falsehood in questions of belief, and beauty from ugliness in actions.

When this faculty is sound it bears fruit in the form of wisdom, which is the chief of the good traits of character, and regarding which God has said: "...and whoever has wisdom bestowed upon him indeed has been endowed with a bounty overflowing..." (Surah 2 verse 269) Regarding the irascible faculty, this is sound when its movements lie within the bounds required by wisdom. Likewise, the appetitive faculty is sound and good when it is under the command of wisdom, by which I mean the command of the Law and the intellect. As for the faculty to effect a just equilibrium, it is this which sets desire and anger under the command of the intellect and the Law. For the intellect has the status of a guiding counselor, while the faculty for just equilibrium is the (actualising) power, and has the status of something which carries out its orders. The same command is carried out by the irascible faculty, which is like a hunting dog which needs to be trained before its unleashing and restraint can conform it to orders rather than to the outbursts of the soul's desire. In turn, desire is like a horse which one rides during the chase, and which is sometimes tractable and well disciplined, and sometimes endeavors to bolt. Therefore, the man in whom these characteristics are sound and balanced is possessed of a good character under all circumstances. The man in whom some of them are balanced and not others is good of character in respect of his balanced traits alone, in the manner of a man only some of whose facial features are handsome. The irascible faculty, when sound and balanced, is called 'courage' (*shuj'a*); similarly, the appetitive faculty, when sound and balanced, is known as 'Temperance' (*iffa*). Should the former faculty lose its balance and incline towards excess it is called 'recklessness' (*tahawwur*), while should it incline towards weakness and insufficiency it is termed 'cowardice' (*jubn*) and 'languor' (*khur*). Should the appetitive faculty move to the point of excess it is called 'cupidity' (*sharah*), while if it should incline to defect it is known as 'indifference' (*jumud*). The mean is the praiseworthy thing, and it is this which constitutes virtue, while the two extremes are blameworthy vices.

The faculty for just equilibrium, however, when in disorder, has no extremes of excess and defect; rather it has one opposite, which is tyranny (*jur*). As for wisdom, exceeding the bounds in its regard by using it

for corrupt ends is called 'swindling' and 'fraud'. While its insufficient application is termed 'stupidity' (*balah*). Again it is the mean to which the word 'wisdom' is applied.

Therefore the fundamental good traits of character are four in number: Wisdom, Courage, Temperance and Justice. By 'wisdom' we mean a condition of the soul by which it distinguishes true from false in all volitional acts, by 'justice' a condition and potency in the soul by which it controls the expansion and contraction of anger and desire as directed by wisdom. By 'courage' we refer to the subjection of the irascible faculty to the intellect, while by 'temperance' we have in mind the disciplining of the appetitive faculty by the intellect and the Law. It is from the equilibrium of these four principles that all the good traits of character proceed, since when the intellect is balanced it will bring forth discretion (*husn al-tadbir*) and excellence of discernment (*jawdat al-dhihn*), penetration of thought (*thaqabat al-ra'y*) and correctness of conjecture (*isabat al-zann*), and an understanding of the subtle implications of actions and the hidden defects of the soul. When unbalanced in the direction of excess, then cunning, swindling, deception and slyness result, and when in that of defect, then stupidity (*balah*), inexperience (*ghimara*), foolishness (*hamq*), heedlessness and insanity are the consequences. By inexperience I mean an insufficient experience which is nonetheless combined with sound understanding; a man may be inexperienced in one matter and not in another. The difference between stupidity and insanity is that the intention of the stupid man is sound, only his means of realising it are defective, since he is not possessed of a correct understanding of how to follow the way leading to his goal; the madman, on the other hand, chooses that which should not be chosen, so that the basis of his decisions and preference is flawed.

As for the trait of Courage, this gives rise to nobility (*karam*), intrepidity (*najda*), manliness (*shahama*), greatness of soul, endurance (*ihtimal*), clemency (*hilm*), steadfastness (*thabat*), the suppression of rage (*kazm al-ghayz*), dignity (*waqar*), affection and other such praiseworthy qualities. When unbalanced on the side of excess, which is recklessness, it leads to

arrogance (*salaf*) conceit (*badhkh*), quickness to anger (*istishata*), pride (*takabbur*) and vainglory, self-abasement (*dhilla*), cowardice (*jaza*), meanness (*khasasa*), lack of resolution (*sighar al-nafs*), and holding oneself back from doing that which is right and obligatory. As for the quality of Temperance, this gives rise to generosity (*sakha'*), modesty (*haya*), patience (*sabr*), tolerance (*musamaha*), contentedness with one's lot (*qina'a*), scrupulousness, wit, helping others (*musa'ada*), cheerfulness (*zarf*) and absence of craving (*qillat al-tama*). When it deviates towards excess or defect, greed (*hirs*), cupidity (*sharah*) and obscenity (*waqaha*) result, as do spite (*khubth*), extravagance (*tabdhir*), stinginess (*taqsir*), ostentation (*riya*), immorality (*hutka*), obscenity (*majana*), triviality (*'abath*), flattery (*malq*), envy (*hasad*), malice (*shamata*), self-abasement before the rich, disdain for the poor, and so forth.

An Exposition on the Susceptibility of the Traits of Character to Change through Discipline

Know that the man who is dominated by sloth will consider unpleasant any spiritual struggle and discipline, or any purifying of the soul and refinement of the character. Because of his deficiency and remissness, and the foulness of his inward nature, his soul will not permit him to undertake such a thing, therefore he will claim that the traits of a man's character cannot conceivably be altered, and that human nature is immutable. He will adduce two things in support of this claim. Firstly, he will say that character (*khuluq*) is the form of the inward in the same way that the created form (*khalq*) of man is the form of the outward. No one is able to alter his external appearance; a short man cannot make himself tall, neither can an ugly man render himself handsome, and vice versa; and thus is the case with inward ugliness. Secondly, he will assert that goodness of character proceeds from suppressing one's desire and anger, and that he has tested this by means of a long inward struggle which demonstrated to him that these things are part of one's character and nature, which can never be separated from the human creature, so that busying oneself with such struggling is profitless and a waste of time.

(To such an objection) we would say: Were the traits of character not susceptible to change there would be no value in counsels, sermons and discipline, and the Prophet would not have said: "Improve your characters!" How could such a denial with respect to the human creature be made? It is possible to improve the character even of an animal; a falcon can be transformed from savagery to tameness, a dog from mere greed for food to good behaviour and self restraint, a horse from defiance to docility and obedience, and all of these things constitute a change in character.

Of course, temperaments vary; some accept this thing rapidly, while others do not. There are two reasons for this disparity.

Firstly, there is the power of the instinct (ghariza) which lies at the root of one's temperament, together with the length of time for which it has been present; the capacities for desire, anger and pride are all present in the human creature; however the most difficult to deal with and the least susceptible to change is that of desire, which is the oldest capacity in man. For it is the first thing to be created in a child, to be followed, perhaps after seven years, by anger, and finally, the power of discretion. The second reason is that a trait of character may be reinforced as a result of acting frequently in accordance with it and obeying it, and considering it to be fine and satisfactory.

The other illusory notion which is adduced is the statement that anger, desire, worldliness and the other traits of this kind cannot be torn from the human creature for as long as he lives. This is also an error, into which a faction has fallen which imagines that the purpose of spiritual struggle is the complete suppression and effacement of these attributes. Such a view is absurd, for desire has been created for a purpose, and is an indispensable part of human nature; should the desire for food cease man would die, should the desire for sexual intercourse cease man would die out; and should man feel no anger he would not be able to defend himself from those things which threaten his life. When the basis of desire remains, the love of property must necessarily remain also, which encour-

ages one to guard it. What is required is not the total extirpation of these things, but rather the restoration of their balance and moderation, which is the middle point between excess and defect. With regard to the trait of anger, what is needed is sound ardour, which lies in the avoidance of both recklessness and cowardice, and generally to be strong in oneself but nevertheless under the control of the intellect. It is for this reason that God Almighty has said: "...severe against the unbelievers, and merciful among themselves (Surah 48 verse 29), describing the believers as 'severe'; severity can only arise from anger, and were there to be no anger, there could be no Jihad against the unbelievers. And how could one intend to uproot anger and desire entirely when the Prophets themselves were not divested of them? God's Messenger once said: "I am only a man, and, like other men, I become angry." He would become so angry that his cheeks would be flushed, although he would never say anything but the truth, from which anger never caused him to diverge.

A General Exposition on the Means by which Good Character may be Acquired

You have come to know that goodness of character proceeds from an equilibrium in the rational faculty brought about through sound wisdom, and in the irascible and appetitive faculties through their submission to the intellect and the Law. This equilibrium may come about in two ways.

One of these is through Divine grace, and completeness of innate disposition (*kamal fıtri*), whereby a man is born and created with a sound intellect and a good character, and is preserved from the powers of desire and anger, which are created in him moderate and submissive to the intellect and the Law. Thus he becomes learned without an instructor, and disciplined without being subject to any discipline, in the manner of Jesus, the son of Mary; and John, the son of Zacharias, and all the other Prophets (may the blessings of God be upon them all). Yet it is not to be deemed improbable that certain things should exist in a man's nature and disposition which can be obtained through acquisition: some children are created truthful, generous and courageous, while in others the opposite

characteristics have been set, so that (in this case) good qualities can only be acquired through habituation and associating with those who possess them, and also through education.

The second is the acquisition of these traits of character by means of spiritual struggle and exercise. By this I mean the constraining of the soul to perform the actions which necessarily proceed from the trait desired. For example, a man who wishes to acquire the quality of generosity must oblige himself to do generous things; that is, to give of what he owns, and must continue in this wise, affecting this thing and struggling with his soul until his nature conforms to it and it becomes easy, at which point he will have become a generous person. Similarly in the case of the man dominated by arrogance who wishes to inculcate in his soul the quality of modesty; he should persist for a lengthy period in imitating the behaviour of the modest and struggling against his soul until such behaviour becomes one of his traits and part of his nature, at which time it will come easily.

Ali said: "Faith appears in the heart as a white gleam. As faith grows, so does it whiteness, until, when the servant's faith is complete, the whiteness covers his entire heart. And hypocrisy appears as a black speck, the blackness of which grows in proportion to it, until, when the hypocrisy becomes complete, the heart becomes entirely black."

An Exposition on the Way in Which a Man may Discover the Faults in his Soul

Know that when God Almighty wishes His servant well, He grants him insight into the faults which lie in his soul. The faults of a man of perfect insight are never hidden from him, and whosoever knows his faults is in a position to treat them. Most people, however, are ignorant of the faults of their souls, and might see the splinter in their brother's eye but not the beam which lies in their own. There are four ways by which the man who would know the faults of his soul may do so.

Firstly, he should sit before a Shaikh who has insight into these faults

and hidden weaknesses, and put him in authority over his soul, and follow the instructions he gives in connection with his struggle therewith, as is the place of the aspirant with his Shaikh; this latter will ascertain these faults, and explain to him the method by which they should be treated. However such a man is hardly to be found in this age.

Secondly, he may seek out a true, perceptive and religious friend, and appoint him to be the overseer of his soul, so that he notes his circumstances and deeds, and brings to his attention the inner and external faults, acts and traits which he finds dislikable in him. This was the practice of the wise men and great leaders of the Faith: Umar used to say: "May God grant His mercy to a man who shows me my faults."

It was for this reason that Daud al-Ta'i renounced all human company, and said, when asked why: "What can I do with people who hide my faults from me?" It was ever the desire of religious people to discover their faults through being told of them by others; however, things have come to such a state with us that the most hateful of all people are those who counsel us and draw our attention to our defects.

The third way is to know the faults of one's soul by listening to the statements of one's enemies, for a hostile eye brings out defects; it may happen that a man gains more from an enemy and a foe who reminds him of his faults than from a dissimulating friend who praises and speaks highly of him, and hides from him his faults.

The fourth way is to mingle with people, and to attribute to oneself every blameworthy thing which one sees in them. For 'the believers are mirrors to one another'. Jesus was once asked: "Who taught you?" "I was taught by no one," he replied. "I perceived the ignorance of the ignorant man, and avoided it."

An Exposition on the Signs of Good Character

Know that every man is at first ignorant of the faults which lie in his soul. When he comes to struggle with it, even in the least degree, until he has abandoned the grosser transgressions, he may think to himself that he

has refined his soul and made good his character, and may now dispense with any further struggle. It is therefore essential to explain what are the signs of good character, since good character is equivalent to faith, and bad character to hypocrisy. God Almighty has made mention in His Book of the traits which characterise believers and hypocrites, which are all the fruits of good or bad character. We shall now set forth some of these texts so that you may come to know the sign by which good character may be recognised.

God Almighty has said:

“Prosperous indeed are the believers- * Who are humble in their prayers- * And from vain talk turn away- * And who are active in alms giving- * And guard their chastity- * Except from their wives and what their right hands possess, for that they are not to blame; * And whoever goes beyond that, those are the transgressors. * And those who faithfully observe their trusts and their covenants- * And those who strictly guard their prayers- * Those shall be the heirs-” (Surah 23 verses 1-10)

And He has said:

“Those who repent, those who worship, those who praise, those who wander in devotion for the cause of God, those who bow down, those who prostrate, those who enjoin good and forbid evil, and those who keep God’s limits. Give glad tidings to the believers.” (Surah 9 verse 112).

And He has said: “...those whose hearts tremble with awe when God’s Name is mentioned and when His Revelations are recited to them their faith increases, and they put their trust in their Lord. * Those who establish prayer and spend out of what We have bestowed on them. * Those are the true believers...” (Surah 8 verses 2-4)

Similarly He has said:

“...the true servants of God the Most Gracious, are those who walk modestly on the earth, and who when the ignorant address them, they say: "Peace"; * And those who spend their nights prostrate to their Lord

and standing; * And those who say: "Our Lord, avert from us the chastisement of Hell; surely its chastisement is a grievous torment; * Evil indeed is its dwelling place and as an abode". * Those who when they spend, are not extravagant nor niggardly, but find a middle way between; * And they do not invoke with God any other God, nor kill any soul God has forbidden, except by right, nor commit adultery; and whoever does this shall meet the price of sin; * The chastisement shall be doubled for him on the Day of Resurrection, and he shall abide therein in ignominy; * Except he who repents and believes and does righteous deeds, those, God will change their evil deeds into good deeds, and God is the All-Forgiving, the Merciful. * And whoever repents, and does righteous deeds, he truly turns to God in repentance. * And those who do not bear false witness, and when they pass by vain talk, they pass by with dignity; * And those who when they are reminded of the Revelations of their Lord, pass not at them as if they were deaf and blind; * And those who say: "Our Lord, grant us wives and offspring who will be a joy to our eyes, and make us leaders for the pious". * These shall be rewarded with the highest place in heaven, because they endured patiently, and they will be received therein in peace and greetings- * Dwelling therein forever, fair it is as a dwelling place and an abode. * Say: "My Lord regards you not, except the few righteous ones who invoke Him, but you have rejected, so you will surely see the certain punishment". (Surah 25 verses 63-77)

The man who is uncertain what his condition might be should measure himself against these verses. The presence of all these attributes signifies a good character, while the their complete absence is the sign of a bad one, and the presence of only some indicates a character that is good in parts, and should encourage a man to busy himself with acquiring that which is lacking and preserving that which he possesses already. When describing the believer, the Messenger of God attributed to him many traits, and referred to their totality as the 'good traits of character' (*mahasin al-akhlaq*). He said: "The believer loves for his brother that which he loves for himself." And he said: "Whosoever believes in God

and the Last Day should honour his guest,” and “Whosoever believes in God and the Last Day should honour his neighbour,” and “Whosoever believes in God and the Last Day should say something good, or remain silent.” He declared that the qualities of believers are the best of qualities: “The believer with the most perfect faith is he with the finest character.” And he said: “If you see a believer who is quiet and dignified, then draw near to him, for he has been vouchsafed wisdom.”

A man once summed up the signs of good character by saying: “It is to be abundantly modest, to avoid harming others, to be righteous, truthful in speech, and of little discourse; it is to do many things and slip up infrequently, to avoid excess, to be loyal, friendly, dignified, patient, grateful, satisfied, forbearing, charitable, chaste and pitying; not to curse or to insult people, or to backbite or slander them, and to avoid hastiness, hatred, meanness, and jealousy; to be cheerful and kind, to love (good) and hate (evil) for the sake of God, to be well pleased with Him and to be angry for His sake.”

The finest thing through which good character can be put to the test is steadfastness in the face of suffering, and enduring the harshness of others, for whosoever complains of the bad character of another man has revealed the badness of his own character, since good character is to endure that which offends. The Messenger of God was walking with Anas when one of the nomads came up to him and pulled violently at his thickly edged Najrani cloak. Anas said: “I looked at the neck of the Messenger of God and saw that the cloak’s edge had left a mark there, so roughly had it been pulled. Then the nomad said: ‘O Mohammad! Give me some of God’s money which you have!’ And the Messenger of God turned to face him, and laughed, and ordered that he be given some money.”

It is related that Abou Abd Allah al-Khayyat had a shop in which he would sit, and a Zoroastrian client who made use of his tailoring services. Whenever he made something for this Zoroastrian, the latter would pay him with bad coins, which Abou Abd Allah would take, without either saying anything to him or refusing them. Now it so happened, that one

day Abou Abd Allah had left his shop on some task, and the Zoroastrian came, and, not finding him, paid his apprentice instead - with a bad coin - for something which had been sewn for him. The apprentice looked at it, saw that it was bad, and gave it back. When Abou Abd Allah returned he told him what had occurred. "You have done wrong!" Abou Abd Allah told him. "That Zoroastrian has been dealing with me in this fashion for some while, and I have been patient with him, taking his coins and throwing them into a well so that no other Muslim might be taken in by them."

Al-Ahnaf ibn Qays was asked from whom he had learnt forbearance. "From Qays ibn Asim," he replied. "How forbearing was he?" he was then asked, and he answered: "Once, when he was sitting in his house, a slave girl of his came with a large skewer of roast meat. This fell from her hand and landed on and killed his baby. The slave girl was horrified, but he said: 'Do not be afraid. You are free to go: I give you your freedom, for God's sake'."

Yahya ibn Ziyad al-Harithi had an ill-mannered slave boy. "Why do you keep him?" People asked. "I am learning to be forbearing," was his reply.

These souls were made humble through discipline, so that their qualities reached an equilibrium and their inner aspects were cleansed of all dishonesty, rancour and ill-will. This in turn bore fruit in the form of contentment with all that God Almighty has decreed, which is the highest form of good character.

An Exposition on the Way in which Young Children should be Disciplined, and the Manner of their Upbringing and the Improvement of their Characters

Know that the way in which young children are disciplined is one of the most important of all matters. A child is a trust in the care of his parents, for his pure heart is a precious uncut jewel devoid of any form of carving, which will accept being cut into any shape, and will be disposed

according to the guidance it receives from others. If it is habituated to and instructed in goodness then this will be its practice when it grows up, and it will attain to felicity in this world and the next; its parents too, and all its teachers and preceptors, will share in its reward. Similarly, should it be habituated to evil and neglected as though it were an animal, then misery and perdition will be its lot, and the responsibility for this will be borne by its guardian and supervisor. God Almighty has said:

“O you who believe! Save yourselves and your families from a Fire...”
(Surah 66 verse 6).

A father may strive to protect his son from the fire in this world, but it is of far greater urgency that he should protect him from the fires which exists in the Afterlife. This he should do by giving him discipline, teaching him and refining his character, and by preserving him from bad company, and by not suffering him to acquire the custom of self-indulgence, or to love finery or luxury, in the quest for which he might well squander his life when older and thus perish forever. Rather he should watch over him diligently from his earliest days, and permit none but a woman of virtue and religion to nurse and raise him; her diet should be of permitted things, for there is no blessing (*baraka*) in milk which originates in forbidden food, which, should a child be nourished on it, will knead his native disposition in such a way as to incline his temperament to wrongdoing.

When the signs of discretion appear in him he should again be watched over carefully. The first of these is the rudiments of shame, for when he begins to feel diffident and is ashamed of certain things so that he abandons them, the light of the intellect has dawned in him, whereby he sees that certain things are ugly, and different from others, and begins to be ashamed of some things and not others. This is a gift to him from God Almighty and a good indication that his traits will be balanced, his heart pure, and his intellect sound when he enters upon adulthood.

The child who has developed the capacity for shame should never be neglected; rather this and his discretion should be used as aids in his edu-

cation. The first trait to take control of him will be greed for food; he is to be disciplined in this regard, so that, for instance, he picks up food only with his right hand, says 'In the Name of God' when raising it, eats from that which is nearest to him, and does not start eating before others. He should not stare at his food or at the other people present, neither should he bolt it, but should chew it properly; he should not eat one mouthful after another without a pause, he should not get food on his hand or clothes, and he should acquire the habit of sometimes eating nothing but bread so that he does not think that the presence of other kinds of food is inevitable. He should be made to dislike eating large quantities by being told that this is the practice of animals, and by seeing other children reproached for overeating or praised for being well-mannered and moderate. He should be made to enjoy giving the best foods to others, and encouraged to pay little heed to what he eats and to be contented with its courser varieties.

He should be encouraged to like white rather than He should be encouraged to like white rather than coloured or silk garments, and made firmly to believe that these latter are proper to women and to effeminate men, and that (true) men disdain them. This should be repeatedly emphasised to him so that he dislikes and criticises the wearing by any child he sees of silken or coloured clothes. He should be protected from children who are accustomed to luxury and comfort, and to wearing expensive garments, and from mixing with all who would speak to him of such things and thereby make seem fine in his eyes. For the child who is neglected in the early years of his growth will usually grow up to be ill-natured, dishonest, envious, obstinate, inclined to theft, backbiting and excessive in chatter and laughter, and in slyness and immorality, from all of which things he can be protected through a sound upbringing.

Next he should be busy at school learning the Qur'an, the Traditions, and tales of devout men, so that love for the righteous may take root in his heart. He should be preserved from those varieties of poetry which speak of lovers and passion, and from the company of such men of letters

as claim that these things are part of an elegant and sophisticated nature, for this would implant the seeds of corruption in his heart. Whenever a good trait or action manifests itself in the child he should be admired and rewarded with something which gives him joy, and should be praised in front of others; likewise, when once in a while he does something bad it is best to pretend not to notice and not to bring it to the attention of others (but never to reveal to him that it is something which others might be bold enough to do), particularly if the child himself has diligently endeavored to hide his action, for the exposure of such deeds may cause him to grow emboldened, until he no longer cares when they are made public. Should he repeat the action, he should be privately reproached and made to feel that it was a very serious thing, and be told. 'Beware of doing anything like this again, or I shall tell others and you will be disgraced in front of them!'. He should not be spoken to at length every time, for this would accustom him to being blamed for his misdeeds, and destroy the effectiveness such words have upon his heart. A father should preserve the awe in which the child holds his speech by reproaching him only sometimes; similarly the mother, when reproving him, should frighten him by (threatening to mention the matter to) his father. He should not be permitted to sleep by day, for this conduces to laziness, and should always be allowed to sleep at night, but not on a soft bed, which would prevent his members from growing tough. His body should not be allowed to grow fat, for this would make it hard for him to renounce self-indulgence; instead he should be habituated to rough bedding, clothing and food.

He should also be prevented from doing anything secretly, for he will conceal things only when he believes them to be ugly, and if he is left to continue these practices he will grow used to doing ugly things. He should acquire the habit of walking, moving about and taking exercise for part of the day so that he is not overcome by idleness, and should be taught not to uncover his limbs or walk fast, and not to dangle his arms but to keep them close to his truck. He must be forbidden to boast to his fellows about any of his parent's possessions, whether these be money or

property, or about anything he eats or wears, or about his tablet and pen case, and should become used to being modest, generous and mild in his speech to all with whom he associates. He should be prevented from accepting anything from other boys, if he is from a wealthy and powerful family, and be taught that it is honourable to give, and base and blameworthy to take; while if his parents are poor he should be taught that greed and taking from others is a disgraceful and humiliating practice fit only for dogs, which wag their tails hoping for a morsel.

Children should always be made to deem the love of gold and silver an unsightly thing, and should be warned in this regard even more vigorously than they are warned about snakes and scorpions, for the vice which consists in such love is more dangerous to them (and to adults also) than poison.

A child should be put in the practice of not spitting, yawning or wiping his nose in the presence of others, and taught not to turn his back to anyone, or to cross his legs, or to lean his chin and support his head on his hand, for these practices indicate the presence of sloth. He should be taught how to sit, and be forbidden to speak excessively, it being explained to him that this is a sign of impudence and the custom of children from low families. Making oaths of any sort, whether true or false, should be forbidden him, so that he never acquires this habit as a child. He should be put in the habit of never speaking before anyone else, and of speaking only in response to questions and in proportion to them, and of listening properly whenever an older person is speaking, and rising (when he enters), and making a place for him and sitting facing him. He should be forbidden to speak loosely, or to curse or insult anyone, or to mingle with those who do such things, for these habits will inevitably be acquired should he fall in with bad company, the preservation from which is the very root and foundation of the education of children. If his teacher strikes him he should not cry out and sob, or seek anyone's intercession, but should rather bear his punishment, and be told that to do so is the mark of courage and manhood, while to cry is the practice of slaves and women.

After school, he should be allowed to play in a fashion which gives him some rest after his hard work in class, although he should not be allowed to grow exhausted. To prevent a child from playing, and to fatigue him with constant lessons, will cause his heart to die and harm his intelligence, and make life so hateful to him that he will cast around for some means to escape.

He should be taught to obey his parents and his teacher, and all people who are older than himself, whether relations or not, and to look upon them with respect and admiration and not to play in their presence. As he reaches the age of discretion he should not be excused the ritual ablutions and the prayer, and should be told to fast for a few days during Ramadan, and should be prevented from wearing gold, silk or embroidered clothes. He should be taught about the limits laid down by the Law, and put in fear of theft and unlawful gain, and also of lying, treachery, deceit, and all the other traits which tend to predominate among children. If he is brought up in this way, then as he approaches adulthood he will come to understand the reasons which underlie these things, and will be told that food is a means of maintaining health, and that its sole purpose is to enable man to gain strength for the worship of God Almighty, and that this world is without reality, since it will not endure, and that death must bring its pleasures to an end, and that it is a place through which we pass but in which we cannot abide, unlike the Afterlife, in which we must abide and through which we cannot pass, for death awaits us at every moment, and that therefore the intelligent and insightful man will lay up provisions in this world for his journey into the next so as to gain a high degree in the sight of God Almighty and abundant bliss in the Gardens of Heaven. If his upbringing was sound, then when he attains to maturity these ideas will have a powerful and wholesome effect which will leave an imprint on his heart like an inscription on stone; had it been otherwise, so that the child had grown accustomed to play, boastfulness, rudeness and insolence, and greed for food, clothes and finery, his heart will shrink from accepting truth in the manner of a field where crops wither because of its dry soil.

It is the beginning which should be supervised carefully, for a child is a creature whose essence is receptive to both good and evil; it is only his parents who cause it to be disposed to one or the other. As the Prophet said: "Every child is born with the sound natural disposition (*fitra*); it is only his parents who make of him a Jew, a Christian or a Zoroastrian."

The Third Book

The Breaking of the Two Desires

Kitab Kasr Al-Shahwatayn

An Exposition on the Merit of Hunger and a Condemnation of Satiety

The Messenger of God (peace and prayers be upon him) said: "Make war on your souls by means of hunger and thirst, for the reward which this brings is as that of participation in the *Jihad*. There is no action more beloved in the sight of God than to hunger and to thirst."

And Ibn Abbas said: "The Messenger of God (peace and prayers be upon him) said: Whosoever fills up his belly shall not enter into Paradise."

He was one asked: "O Messenger of God! Who is the best of men?" And he replied: "The one who eats and laughs little, and is content with such clothes suffice to cover his private parts."

And the Prophet (peace and prayers be upon him) said: "Hunger is the lord of all actions, while the wearing of wool brings about humility of the soul."

Abou Sa'id al-Khudri said: "The Messenger of God (peace and prayers be upon him) said: 'Wear your clothes, and eat and drink up to the middle of your stomachs, for to do this is part of prophethood'."

Al Hassan said: "The Prophet (peace and prayers be upon him) once remarked: 'Meditation is half of worship, while eating frugally is all of it'."

And al Hassan also said: "The Prophet (peace and prayers be upon him) once said: 'The most exalted among you in the sight of God on the Day of Judgment shall be those who hungered and meditated the longest for His sake, while the most loathsome among you in His sight on that Day will be those who slept, ate and drank abundantly'."

It is related in Tradition that the Prophet (peace and prayers be upon him) used to hunger without any exigency, that is, by choice.

And he (peace and prayers be upon him) said: "Truly, God Almighty glories before His angels regarding the man who eats and drinks little in this world, saying: 'Behold My servant! I did try him with food and drink in the world, yet he was steadfast and renounced them, bear witness, O My angels, that he renounced not a single morsel but that I vouchsafed him by it with a higher degree in Heaven'."

And he (peace and prayers be upon him) said: "Do not kill your hearts with much food and drink, for the heart is like a farmland which dies if watered excessively."

And he (peace and prayers be upon him) said: "A descendant of Adam can fill no container worse than his own belly. A few small mouthfuls should suffice to keep his back straight; if he cannot keep to this, then let him fill one third with his food, one third with his drink and keep the other for his breath."

The meritorious nature of hunger is mentioned in the long Tradition told be Usama ibn Zayd and Abou Hurayra, in which the Prophet (peace and prayers be upon him) said: "The nearest of all men to God Almighty on the Day of Resurrection shall be those who were often hungry, thirsty and sad in this world, and who were affectionate and Godfearing, who when seen, went unrecognised, and who, when absent were never missed by men, but even so were known to the provinces of the earth and were compassed by the angels of heaven. Others rejoiced in the world, but they rejoiced in their obedience to God Almighty. Others made soft beds for themselves, while they rested only on their foreheads and their knees. Others caused the works and morals of the Prophets to be lost, while they observed them. The earth itself weeps when it loses them, and the Almighty's wrath descends upon every land in which they are not found. They did not rush into the world as dogs descend upon a carcass; rather did they eat such food as was sufficient to retain life, wear patched garments, and were disheveled and dusty headed. When the people saw

them they thought them to be sick, yet they were not sick. It was said: "They are deranged; they have lost their minds", yet they were of sound mind, it was only that the people's hearts beheld the decree of God, which had divested them of the world, so that for the world's people they walked without minds. Yet when the minds of the people had departed from them, it was they who understood. Theirs is the honour of the Hereafter, O Usama! When you see them in a land, know that they are a source of protection for its people, for God shall never loose His chastisement upon a nation among whom they live. The very earth rejoices at them, and with them the Almighty is well pleased. Therefore hold them for your brethren, that perhaps they will be the cause of your salvation. And if you can live so that when death comes to you your stomach hungers and your liver thirsts, then you shall attain to the most exalted ranks, and shall abide with the Prophets; the angels themselves shall rejoice at the advent of your spirit, and the Almighty shall grant you His blessing."

Al Hassan (may be pleased with him) relates on the authority of Abou Hurayra that the Prophet (peace and prayers be upon him) said: "Wear garments of wool, and roll up your sleeves, and eat with only half your bellies, for thereby you shall enter into Paradise."

Jesus (peace be upon him) once said: "O company of disciples! Cause your livers to hunger and your bodies to go naked, that perhaps your hearts may behold God Almighty." This saying has also been handed down from our own Prophet (peace and prayers be upon him) on the authority of Tawus.

It is said that it is written in the Torah that God loathes the corpulent devout. This is because corpulence is a sign of heedlessness and an abundant indulgence in food, something which is especially ugly in the case of the devout. It was for this reason that Ibn Masoud (may God be pleased with him) said: "God abhors a reader (of the Qur'an) who has become corpulent through frequent satiety."

In a *mursal* Tradition it is said that: "The devil courses with the blood in the descendants of Adam; straiten, therefore, his courses with hunger and thirst."

It is related in Tradition that to eat when already sated is conducive to leprosy.

And he (peace and prayers be upon him) said: "The believer eats with one gut, while the hypocrite eats with seven." Or, "his appetite is seven times as great as that of the believer", using the word 'gut' as a metaphor for 'appetite', for this latter accepts food just as does the gut; the meaning is not that the hypocrite actually has more numerous guts than the believer.

Al Hassan relates that Aisha (may God be pleased with her) said: 'I once heard the Messenger of God (peace and prayers be upon him) say: "Knock persistently on Heaven's door, and it shall be opened to you." I asked: "How shall we do that?" and he replied: "With hunger and thirst".'

It is related that Abou Juhayfa once belched while sitting with the Messenger of God (peace and prayers be upon him) who said: "You should belch less; for those who were most sated in this world shall hunger the longest on the Day of Resurrection."

Aisha (may God be pleased with her) used to say: 'The Messenger of God (peace and prayers be upon him) never ate to satiety; sometimes, seeing his hunger, I would weep out of pity for him, and rub his belly with my hand, saying, "May I be your ransom! Why do you not partake in the things of this world in as much as to strengthen you and preserve you from hunger?" But he would only say: "O Aisha! My brethren, the resolute among the Messengers, were steadfast in the face of circumstances still harsher, but persevered, so that when they came to their Lord He vouchsafed them a generous place of return and a munificent reward. Thus it is that I find myself ashamed to enjoy any comforts in this life, lest on the morrow I might not attain to their degree. Steadfastness for a

few days is preferable to me than to see my lot reduced tomorrow in the Hereafter; for of all things, that which I desire most is that I should catch up with my companions and my brethren.” She remarked: “And by God it was no more than a week after that when God took him unto Himself”.’

Anas said: “Fatimah (may God be pleased with her) once brought a piece of bread to the Messenger of God (peace and prayers be upon him), he inquired: “What is this?” and she said: “I have just baked a loaf, and my soul would not be still until I had brought this piece to you.” He remarked: “It is the first food to have passed the lips of your father for three days.”

Abou Hurayra said: “The Prophet never ate his fill of wheat bread for three consecutive days until he left this world.”

And he (peace and prayers be upon him) said: “Those who hunger in this world shall be fed handsomely in the next. Truly, the most hateful of men in the sight of God is the one who is replete and suffers from indigestion. No servant renounces a morsel which he had desired without it raising his degree in Heaven.”

The Narratives

Umar (may God be pleased with him) has said: “Beware of satiety, for it is a burden in life and a source of corruption after death.”

Shaqiq al Balkhi said: “Worship is a trade, the shop of which is one’s retreat, and whose tool is hunger.”

Luqman once said to his son: “O my son! When the belly is full, then the intellect sleeps, wisdom is silenced, and the members of the body are too slothful to perform any act of worship.”

Al Fudail ibn Iyad used to say (to his soul): “What is it that you fear? Are you afraid of hunger? Be not so, for you are of too little account in God’s sight for that. Only Mohammad (peace and prayers be upon him) and his Companions were (truly) hungry.”

Kahmas used to say: "O my God! You have rendered me hungry and naked, and have caused me to sit in the darkness of the night without any lamp. For what cause have You given me to attain this thing?"

Whenever Fath al Mawsilit was hungry and grievously ill he would say: "O my God! You have tried me with hunger and disease, as You did with Your saints; by what act, therefore, may I show my gratitude for that with which You have blessed me?"

Malik ibn Dinar said: "I once said to Mohammad ibn Wasi: 'O Abou Abd Allah! Blessed is he who has a source of income which strengthens him and makes him independent of other men.' But he said: 'O Abou Yahya! Blessed is he who hungers morning and night, and yet is well pleased with his Lord'."

Al Fudail ibn Iyad used to say: "O my God! You have made me and my family to hunger, and have left me without a lamp in the darkness of the night. You act in this way with Your saints, by what rank, then have I won from You this thing?"

Yahya ibn Mu'adh said: "The hunger of the yearners wakes them, the hunger of the penitent tests them, the hunger of the strivers ennobles them, the hunger of the steadfast gives them power and the hunger of the ascetics invests them with wisdom."

In the Torah it is written: "Fear God; and when you are sated, recall the hungry."

Abou Sulayman said: "To forsake one morsel of my supper is preferable to me than to spend the whole night in prayer."

And he also said: "Hunger reposes in the storehouses of God, Who gives it only to those He loves."

Sahl al Tustari used to go for about twenty days at once without eating. One dirhem would suffice him for the whole year. He used to stress the importance of hunger, and to go to extreme lengths in it, to the extent that he said: "On the Day of Resurrection, no good work shall be finer than the renunciation of unnecessary food done in imitation of the Proph-

et (peace and prayers be upon him).” And he also said: “Men of intelligence have never seen anything more beneficial to one’s religious and mundane life than hunger.” And he said: “I know of nothing which is more damaging to those who seek the Hereafter than food.” And he said: “Wisdom and knowledge have been set in hunger, and ignorance and sin in satiety.” And he said: “There is no finer means of worshiping God than to disobey one’s whims by renouncing something lawful.”

Regarding the Tradition of ‘one third for one’s food’, he (Sahl) said: “Whosoever exceeds this is merely eating up his own good works.” He was asked how one could do more, and he replied: “He shall not do more until refraining is more desirable to him than eating, and until, when he hungers for one night he prays God to make him hunger for two, when this occurs he will be doing more.”

And he said: “The *Abdal* attained their rank only by making their bellies slender, and through sleeplessness, silence and solitude.”

And he said: “The beginning of every virtue sent down from heaven to earth is hunger, and the beginning of every vice which exists between the two is satiety.”

And he said: “Whosoever makes himself hungry is severed from the whisperings of the devil.”

And he said: “God draws nearer to His servant through his hunger, illness and tribulation, save those whom Him will.”

And he said: “Know that this is an age in which no man shall attain salvation except by slaughtering his soul, which is to be done by means of hunger, sleeplessness and inner strife.”

And he said: “Not a single man who has walked the face of the earth has drunk his fill of water and remained safe from sin, even if he rendered thanks to God Almighty; what therefore must be the case when one is sated on food?”

A sage was once asked: “By what rope may I tie my soul?” and he replied: “You should tie it with the rope of hunger and thirst, and bring it

low by extinguishing your pride and forsaking being mentioned, and should reduce it by setting it under the feet of the sons of the Hereafter, and break it by renouncing the appearance of the rich. Save yourself from its defects by always harbouring a poor opinion of it, and make it tractable by disobeying its whims.”

Abd Al Wahid ibn Zayd used to swear by God that God has never purified anyone except through hunger, and that no one has walked on air and water or has had the distances of the earth folded up for him, or has been made one of His saints, except by virtue of it.

Abou Talib al Makki said: “The stomach is like a *muzhir* (lute), which is a hollow stick with strings, the beauty of its sound proceeds only from its lightness and delicacy, and because it is hollow and not filled. The stomach is similar to it, for when it is empty of food and drink it renders one’s (Quran’ic) recitation sweeter, one’s standing (in night prayer) more constant, and one’s sleep briefer.”

Bakr ibn Abd Allah al Mazani said: “Three men are beloved of God Almighty, he who sleeps little, he who eats little, and he who rests little.”

It is related that Jesus (peace be upon him) once communed with his Lord for sixty days, during which time he did not eat. While he was doing this the thought of bread entered his mind, and his communing was broken off; and a loaf had been set before him. He sat down and wept over having lost his communing, and there stood before him an old man, looking over him. Jesus said: “O saint of God! May God bless you! Pray God for me, for I was in a state which was interrupted when the (mere) thought of bread occurred to me!” And the old man (prayed and) said: “O Lord God! If it is that You know I have thought of bread since the time I attained knowledge of You, then never forgive me, rather, whenever something came before me I ate it without any thought or distraction.”

It told that when Moses (peace be upon him) was brought near in communing he had forsaken food for forty days; first thirty and then ten more, as is stated in the Qur’an, for one night he had not fasted and was given ten more days as a result.

An Exposition on the Benefits of Hunger and the Evils of Satiety

The Messenger of God (peace and prayers be upon him) said: “Make war on your souls by means of hunger and thirst, for the reward which this brings...”

Now you may ask: “This great merit which attaches to hunger; from what thing does it proceed, and what reason is there for it? For hunger comprises no more than hurting the stomach and enduring torment, and if there be reward in such things then man should be rewarded generously for every hurt which he sustains, including blows which he directs against himself, cutting his own flesh, swallowing loathsome objects, and similar actions”. You should know, however, that such words resemble the statement of a man who takes and profits from medicine, and who, declaring that its benefit proceeds from its unpleasantness and its bitter taste, then takes to swallowing everything which tastes unpleasant. This is a mistaken attitude, for the benefit lies in a special property which is present in the medicine, not in its bitter taste. Just as the physicians alone are aware of this property, so too is the reason for the beneficial nature of hunger known only to the great scholars. Whoever makes himself hungry, having believed the revealed texts which praise hunger, must needs benefit, even if he does not know why it is beneficial, in the manner of a man who takes medicine, and benefits without being told how it profits him.

But despite this, we shall explain this matter for the benefit of those who wish to rise from the level of belief to that of knowledge, for God Almighty has said: “...God will raise up in rank those of you who believe and who have been granted knowledge...” (Surah 58 verse 11)

Hunger has ten benefits. **The first** of these is the purification of the heart, the illumination of the natural disposition (*qariha*) and the sharpening of one’s insight. For satiety engenders stupidity and a blindness in the heart, and increases the vapours of the brain to produce a form of inebriation, so that the sources of thought are repressed and the heart finds it a burdensome thing to think and perceive things with any rapidity. A

child, when it eats too much, becomes unable to memorise things, and its mind is corrupted so that it becomes slow and dull-witted.

Abou Sulayman al-Darani said: “Make yourselves hungry, for this abases the soul, softens the heart, and yields heavenly knowledge.”

The second benefit is a softness and purity of the heart, by which it is readied to attain the delight of intimate discourse with God and to be affected by His remembrance. How many acts of remembrance there are which are done with the tongue and with an attentive heart, while the heart nonetheless fails to find any delight therein and is not affected, to the extent that it were as though a veil existed composed of the heart’s hardness! When, however, it is softened due to certain circumstances, it will be affected most powerfully by the remembrance and will take great delight in communing with Him. Usually an empty stomach is the reason for this.

Abou Sulayman al-Darani said: “Worship is sweetest for me when my belly cleaves to my back.”

The third benefit lies in mortification and abasement, and the removal of exultation, rejoicing and exuberance, which comprise the beginning of rebellion and heedlessness of God Almighty. For the soul is mortified and abased by nothing more effective than hunger, which, when it prevails, causes it to have placid trust in its Lord and fear of Him, and to be aware of its helplessness and abasement when it weakens and becomes desperate for the morsel of bread which it misses, so that the whole world appears dark to a man because one drink of water did not come when he desired it.

The fourth benefit is that one comes never to forget God’s trials and torments, or those who are afflicted by them. For the man sated is liable to forget those people who are hungry, and to forget hunger itself. The intelligent servant never beholds a tribulation without recalling the tribulations of the Afterlife; when he thirsts, he remembers the thirst from which people will suffer on the wide plains of the Day of Arising, and

when he hungers he recalls the hunger of the people of Hell.

When Joseph (peace be upon him) was asked: “Why do you hunger, when you hold in your hands the storehouses of the land?” he replied, “I fear that I may eat my fill, and forget the hungry.”

The fifth and greatest benefit lies in the breaking of all one’s desires for sin, and in achieving mastery over the soul which commands evil. For all sins originate in one’s desires and strengths, the stuff of which is food in every case; when one eats less, every one of one’s desires and strengths will be enfeebled. The saving felicity (sa’ada) of man consists entirely in the control he wields over his own soul, while damnation and misery ensue when his soul controls him.

The sixth benefit consists in the repulsion of sleep, and acquiring the ability to remain awake for long periods. A man who eats his fill will drink abundantly, and whoever drinks abundantly will sleep abundantly also. For this reason one of the Shaikhs used to say whenever food was served: “Assembled aspirants! Do not eat much, lest you drink much, which will cause you to sleep much, and therefore to lose much.” In addition, the manifestly great merit which attaches to the *Tahajjud* prayer will pass one by if one sleeps abundantly.

The seventh benefit is that lengthy acts of worship are made easier. Food prevents a man from worshiping much, since he needs a time in which he busies himself with eating, and may require time for buying and cooking food as well. He needs time to wash his hands, and to pick his teeth, and will make many visits to the privy because of having drunk so much.

The eighth benefit is the bodily health which results from eating little. For diseases are caused by overeating, and by the presence of a residue of mixtures in the stomach and the arteries. Illness prevents one from worshiping; it distracts the heart and stands in the way of remembrance and reflection; it spoils one’s life, and obliges one to submit to bloodletting and cupping, and to drinking medicines and seeing physicians, all of

which requires money, which in turn can only be obtained through things which require that one exhaust oneself in avoiding various kinds of sins and desires. Hunger makes all of this unnecessary.

The ninth benefit lies in reduced expenditure. Whoever becomes used to eating little will find a modest income sufficient, whereas a man who is habituated to eating his fill will find that his belly becomes a creditor impossible to shake off, who seizes him by the throat every day, saying: "What will you eat today?" Therefore he will be compelled to enter into all sorts of activities, and either earn from unlawful pursuits, so that he sins or from lawful ones, which will involve him in humiliation and exhaustion. Someone else said: "Whenever I feel a wish to borrow money from someone for the sake of satisfying a desire or making an investment, I borrow from myself, whereupon I renounce the desire. Thus I am my own best creditor."

Ibrahim ibn Adham used to ask his companions about the price of food. When told that it was high, he would say: "Lower it with renunciation!"

The tenth benefit is that the aspirant is enabled to put others before himself, and to give in charity to the orphans and the poor that which is surplus to his wants. On the Day of Arising he will be shaded by his charity.

Such then, are the ten benefits of hunger. Under each one are subsumed countless subdivisions of incalculable advantage.

An Exposition on the Method by which Discipline is Used to Break the Greed of the Stomach

Know that four duties (*waza'if*) are incumbent upon the aspirant with regard to his belly and his diet. The first is that he should only eat food that is lawful (*halal*), for to worship on a diet of unlawful food is like building on the waves of the sea. We have already made mention of the degrees of scrupulousness which must be observed in this regard in the Book of the Lawful and the Unlawful. But there are three other duties

concerning food: to estimate the quantity of food ones eats, whether great or small, to estimate the speed with which one eats it, and to know which varieties of food are most conducive to the satisfying or the renunciation of one's desire.

As for the first of these (three) duties, which concerns the reduction of one's intake of food, the method by which one may discipline oneself therein consists in gradualness. This is because the constitution of a man who is accustomed to eating much, and who then changes all at once to eating little, will not be able to sustain this, and will be weakened, resulting in considerable hardship and distress. He should therefore proceed a little at a time by progressively less and less of his accustomed nourishment; should, for example, he customarily eat two loaves, and wish to restrict himself to no more than one, he should reduce his consumption each day by a quarter of one-seventh of a loaf (so that he eats one twenty eighth or one thirtieth of a loaf less) which will enable him to eat only one loaf a day by the end of the month without hardship or any noticeable effect. If he so desires, he may do this with the aid of scales, or simply through his own judgment, by eating every day one morsel less than the day before.

The second duty concerns the time of eating, and the extent to which this should be delayed. This also consists of four degrees. The highest is that one should go without food for three days, or more: seven, ten or fifteen. Some aspirants make continual fasting, rather than restricting the amount of food they eat, the basis of their self-discipline, to the extent that they fast without interruption for thirty or forty days.

The second degree (of the second duty) is achieved when one goes without food for two or three days together. This is not a miraculous thing; rather it is quite attainable, although it may only be reached through effort and struggle.

The third degree, which is the lowest, is that one restrict oneself in every day and night to one meal. This is the least one should do: everything beyond it constitutes extravagance, and persistence in satiety, so that the condition of hunger never occurs at all, which is the state - far re-

moved from the *Sunnah* - of those who live in luxury.

The third duty concerns the varieties of food one eats, and which of these one should renounce. The best form of bread is made from finely ground flour, which constitutes an extreme form of luxury. Beneath it comes bread from sifted barley flour, while the most inferior kind is barley flour that has not been sifted. Of things which may be eaten with bread, the finest are meat and sweetmeats, the lowest vinegar and salt, while in between lie dishes of vegetables served with oil but no meat. The custom of wayfarers on the Path of the Afterlife is to abstain always from eating anything other than bread, and from indulging every other appetite, for each delicious thing which a man desires and eats leaves behind it an exuberance in his soul and a hardness and forgetfulness in his heart engendered by the delights of the world, so that he comes to be familiar with these, and conceives a dislike for death and the meeting with God Almighty. The world becomes like Heaven for him, while death turns into a goal. However when he forbids his soul its passions and delights, and restricts it, the world becomes a goal and a constraint for him, so that his soul desires to escape from it immediately, and death becomes a liberation.

It is related of Malik ibn Dinar that he desired yogurt for forty years, but never ate it once. One day, he was given some fresh dates as a present: "Eat," he said to his companions, "For I have not eaten fresh dates for forty years."

Malik ibn Daygham said: "I once passed through the souk at Basra, where I spotted some green vegetables. My soul said to me: "If you would only give me some of those to eat tonight!" And I swore by God that I would not give it green vegetables to eat for forty nights."

Malik ibn Dinar spent fifty years at Basra, but never ate a single one of its dates, whether ripe or not. "O people of Basra!" he said: "For forty years I have lived among you, and have not eaten a single one of your ripe or unripe dates, which thing has neither harmed me, nor benefited you."

God grant us success in pleasing You.

An Exposition of Variance in Role and Merit of Hunger in Accordance with the Circumstances of Men

Know that the most exalted desideratum in all matters and morals is moderation. For the best of affairs is the middle course, and both extremes in any matter are blameworthy. Our discourse concerning the merits which attach to hunger may have suggested that extremeness is required in this regard, but this is certainly not the case. For it is one of the secret wisdom of Law [*Shari'a*] that whenever man's nature demands that he go to an unsound extreme, the Law also goes to extremes in forbidding this, in a fashion which to an uninformed man might suggest that it requires the complete opposite of what human nature (*tab*) demands. The man of knowledge, however, realises that it is the mean that is required. This is because human nature, demanding as it does the maximum of satiety, must be countered by the Law with praises of extreme hunger, so that the instincts of man's nature and the prohibitions of the Law stand opposite one another, thereby bringing about an equilibrium. For it is an unlikely thing that a man might suppress his nature entirely; rather he will realise that he shall never reach this goal. Even were he to go to the greatest extremes in countering his nature, the Law would indicate that he had erred. The Law praises to the utmost those who pray all night and fast by day, yet when the Prophet (peace and prayers be upon him) learnt that someone was fasting every day, and praying all night, he forbade him to continue.

Having learnt this, you should also know that the best course for a man of moderate nature is to eat so that his stomach is not heavy, but without feeling the pangs of hunger. One should forget one's belly, and not harbour any preference for hunger. For the purpose of eating is the preservation of life and the gaining of strength for worship, a heavy stomach is an obstruction to worship, and so are the pangs of hunger, for they distract the heart. What is required is that one eats so as to prevent one's food from having an effect, at which one will be emulating the angels, who are too holy either for the heaviness of food or the pangs of

hunger, and it is man's utmost purpose to emulate them. If a man remains unredeemed from satiety and hunger, then the furthest he can go from both extremes is the mean, which is the place of equilibrium. A human being, in his striving to distance himself from these opposite extremes by returning to the middle, can be compared to an ant thrown into the centre of a ring heated in fire and set on the earth; it will flee from the ring's heat which surrounds it, but being unable to escape, will continue to run about until it comes to rest in the centre (should it die, it will die there); because the centre is the furthest point from the heat of the encompassing ring. Man's desires surround him like the ring which contains the ant, while the angels are outside the ring, to where he cannot hope to escape. Still he desires to imitate them in their liberty, and finds that he resembles them most when he is far from his desires, and he is never further from those desires than when he is at the centre. Thus is the mean required in all traits of character which have opposites. This was expressed the Prophet (peace and prayers be upon him) when he said: "The best of affairs is the middle course." And it is indicated in the statement of God Almighty: "...and eat and drink, but do not be excessive..." (Surah 7 verse 31) To the extent that a man feels neither hunger nor satiety, he will find worship and contemplation easy, and being light, will have the strength to act.

This, however, comes about after one's nature has been set in equilibrium. At the outset, should the soul have a tendency to bolt, crave the satisfaction of its desires, and incline to excess, the mean will yield it no advantage; instead one must go to extreme lengths to hurt it with hunger, in the way that one must employ hunger, blows and other things to hurt a riding beast that is not broken in until it becomes moderate in its temperament. When it is broken in, it becomes balanced, and reverts to the equilibrium, one may cease training and hurting it. It is for this secret reason that a Shaikh may command his aspirants to perform things which he himself does not do; he instructs them to be hungry, while he himself is not, or he may forbid them to eat fruits and other desirable things which he himself does not refrain from, having concluded the discipline of his

own soul so that he no longer stands in need of such training.

Since the dominant condition of the soul is one of greed, desire, rebellion and refusal to worship, the most profitable thing for it is hunger, the pain of which it feels under most circumstances, and which leads to its subjugation. The intention is that the soul should be broken in this way until it becomes balanced, which condition will abide even after it returns to its food. Among wayfarers on the Path of the Hereafter, the only people who refrain from hunger are Truthful Saints and self deluded imbeciles; the former because their souls are following the Straight Path with perfect rectitude, and because they have no need of being driven with the whip of hunger to the True God, and the latter because they think themselves to be like the saints, and have a high opinion of their own souls. This is a serious form of illusion, and has become prevalent, since the soul is seldom disciplined completely, and frequently falls into illusion, so that it looks at the manner in which the Truthful Saints permit their souls certain things, and is permissive itself. In this way it resembles a sick man who watches someone who has been cured, and follows the same diet, thinking that he himself is being cured also, which thing will lead to his destruction.

There is a proof text which shows that to fix the quantity and variety of food one eats, and the time when one eats it, is not required in itself, but only insofar as it is a valuable form of struggle against a soul which is remote from the True God and has not attained the rank of perfection. This consists in the fact that the Messenger of God (peace and prayers be upon him) did not fix a specific quantity or time for his meals. Aisha (may God be pleased with her) said: "The Messenger of God (peace and prayers be upon him) used to fast until we would say that he would never break his fast again." He used to go in to his family and ask: "Do you have anything?" If they said yes, he would eat, and if they said no, he would say: "Then I am fasting." If he was served with anything, he would declare: "I had wanted to fast." and then eat. One day he went out saying : "I am fasting", and Aisha told him: "We have been given some

hays (dates with butter and cheese).” He (peace and prayers be upon him) said: “I had wanted to fast, but serve it instead.” For this reason it has been related that when someone asked Sahl how he had begun his devotional life, he answered that he had performed many kinds of spiritual exercises, such as living for a time on the leaves of the lote tree, and then for three years on chaff, and that he had lived for three more years only on three dirhems. Then he was asked: “What do you do now?” and he replied: “I eat without observing any particular limit, or any fixed time.” By saying ‘without any particular limit, or any fixed time’ he did not mean that he ate abundantly, but rather that he did not fix a single quantity of food in advance.

Marouf Al Kharkhi was once given some delicious food, which he ate. Someone told him: “Your brother Bishr does not eat such things.” He replied: “My brother Bishr is in a state of constriction begotten of scrupulousness (*wara*), while I am in a state of expansion resulting from gnosis (*ma’rifa*).” Then he said: “I am no more than a guest in my Lord’s house. When He gives me food, I eat; when He gives me hunger, I endure patiently. What have I to do with repudiation and making distinctions?”

Ibrahim ibn Adham once gave some dirhems to one of his companions with the words: “Buy some butter, honey and white bread for us.” Someone said: “O Abou Ishaq! All that?” And he replied: “Shame on you! When we have money, we eat like men, and when we have none, we endure like men.” One day he prepared a large meal, and invited a small company, which included al Awazai and al Thawri, to partake of it. This latter asked him: “O Abou Ishaq! Are you not afraid that this might constitute prodigality?” He replied: “There is no prodigality in food, prodigality obtains only in respect of clothes and furnishing.”

Someone who acquires his knowledge imitatively (*taqlid*), from lectures and transmitted authority, would see Ibrahim ibn Adham doing this, and at the same time hear Malik ibn Dinar saying: “No salt has entered my house for twenty years.” and al Sari al Saqati declaring that for forty years he had desired to dip a carrot into some treacle, but had not done

so, and think that there was a contradiction here, and be puzzled, and declare that one of them must surely have been in error. The man who has insight, however, into the hidden sciences, will be aware that all of these attitudes are correct, but in relation to differing circumstances. When these situations are spoken of to an intelligent, prudent man, and to someone else who is foolish and self satisfied, the former will say: "I am no gnostic, that I might be gentle with my soul, for it is no more obedient than the soul of Sari al Saqati and Malik ibn Dinar, who were among those who refrained from their desires; therefore shall I follow in their footsteps." The man who is self satisfied, however, will declare: "My soul is no more disobedient to me than the soul of Marouf al Kharki and Ibrahim ibn Adham, so it is they I shall follow. I permit myself any amount of food, for I am too a guest in my Lord's house; what have I to do with repudiation?" This provides the devil with much scope against the foolish; not to observe any limits in the matter of food, (supererogatory) fasting or eating what one desires, is safe only for those who look into the niche (*mishkat*) of sainthood and Prophethood, and who receive signs from God to the effect that they must eat or refrain. This can only take place when the soul has fully emerged from obedience to its whims and to habit, so that when it eats, or refrains from eating, it does so with the appropriate intention, and works for God in both cases. One should learn determination from Umar (may God be pleased with him), who saw that the Messenger of God (peace and prayers be upon him) used to like and eat honey, but did not draw an analogy from this for his own situation, and instead, when offered a cold drink which contained honey, turned the container around and around in his hand saying: "Shall I drink it, only for its sweetness to depart and its consequences to remain? Preserve me from being called to account for it." And he left it alone.

These secrets should not be unveiled by a Shaikh of the Path to his aspirants. Instead he should confine himself to praising hunger, and not summon them to moderation, for if he did so they would certainly fall short of it; rather he should summon them towards the very extremes of hunger, in order that such moderation might become easy for them. He

should not tell them that the perfect gnostic may dispense with self discipline, for this would furnish the devil with a pathway to their hearts, so that he would constantly be whispering to each of them: "You are a perfect gnostic, what more gnosis and perfection could you need?" By contrast, the custom of Ibrahim al Khawwas was to engage in every form of self discipline which he instructed his aspirants to perform, so that they would not think that the Shaikh was telling them to do things which he did not do himself, which would cause them to shy away from such forms of discipline. The strong man, when he devotes himself to self discipline and the reform of others, must descend to the level of the weak in order that he might resemble them and be gentle when driving them towards their saving felicity. For the Prophets and saints, this is a great trial.

Since the point of equilibrium for each person is hard to discern, determination and caution should under no circumstances be abandoned. It was for this reason that Umar (may God be pleased with him) disciplined his son Abd Allah, when he once went in to find him eating some meat cooked in clarified butter. Umar struck him with his stick saying: "Wretch! Eat bread and meat one day, and on the next bread and curd, on the next bread and clarified butter, on the next bread and oil, on the next bread and salt, and on the next bread alone!" This is the position of equilibrium. Constantly to eat meat and other desirable things is a form of prodigality and extravagance; to renounce meat altogether is to be grudging, while this is: "...a middle way between." (Surah 25 verse 67)

An Exposition on the Ostentation which may follow from the Renunciation of Desirable Foods and from Eating Frugally

Know that those who renounce desirable foods may be afflicted by two great evils which are even more pernicious than indulging in them.

The first obtains when the soul, being unable to forsake some of the things it finds desirable, and not wishing the fact to be known, conceals its desire and eats things in secret which it does not eat when others are present. This constitutes a form of hidden polytheism.

A scholar was once asked about a certain ascetic, and refused to speak about him. Has he any faults that you know of? he was asked, and he answered, He eats things in private which he does not eat with others. Now this is a serious fault. If a bondsman of God be tried with desires which he loves to gratify, he ought to make them public, for his state will thus be one of honesty, compensating for the absence of acts of spiritual struggle. To conceal one's shortcomings and to make a show of their excellent opposites are themselves two compounded shortcomings, and to lie, and to hide one's lying, are themselves a twofold lie, so that a man guilty of this deserves two chastisements, and will not be acceptable again in his works until he has repented twice. It is for these reasons that God has laid such emphasis upon the issue of the hypocrites, saying: "The hypocrites will be in the lowest abyss of Hell." (Surah 4 verse 145) The unbeliever makes public his unbelief, and is sincere in it, while the hypocrite keep his unbelief hidden, so that this concealment becomes another form of unbelief, since he makes light of God's gazing into his heart, and makes much of the gaze of His creatures by effacing unbelief from his outward aspect. The gnostics too are tried with desires, and even with sins, but are never tried with ostentation, deceit or concealment: the perfect gnostic renounces his desires for the sake of God Almighty and affects their presence in himself in order to diminish the respect in which other men hold him. One of them used to go out and buy delicious things and display them in his house, although he never partook of them. This he did merely to deceive people regarding his state and to repel the hearts of the heedless, so that he would not be distracted from his state. The highest form of renunciation is to renounce renunciation itself by outwardly appearing to do its opposite: this is the practice of the truthful Saints, since it combines two veracities, just as the former combines two lies. It weighs down the soul with two burdens, and forces it to quaff the cup of endurance twice: once by actually drinking it, and once again by suffering insults. Assuredly, such will be given their reward twice on account of their endurance. This is comparable to the way of those who are given and accept money publicly, but who secretly return it, in order to

subjugate their souls through public humiliation and private poverty.

All those who can not accomplish this should at least make their desires and weaknesses public, for the sake of honesty, and should not be beguiled by the devil's saying to them 'If you make these things known, other men will follow you into doing them. So hide them away, and you will reform such a people!' For the man who wishes to reform others should first reform himself. Such a person can only intend sheer ostentation, and the devil encourages him in this by suggesting that he will reform others, for this reason he would find the noising abroad of his desires unpleasant, even if he knew that those who came to know of them would not imitate his actions or renounce something in the belief that he himself had renounced his desires.

The second evil arises when a man genuinely engages in the renunciation of his desires, but he rejoices that he is known to do so, and that he is famous for his continence in the face of his cravings. By doing this he has merely disobeyed a weak desire, namely that of food, and surrendered to a desire which is far worse: that of the love of status. This is a hidden desire. When one detects such a desire in the soul, it is more important to defeat it than to defeat the desire for food itself: in fact, it is more appropriate that such a person should eat.

Abou Sulayman said: "If something is put before you in the nature of a desire which you have renounce, then partake of it just a little, but do not give your soul all it hopes for. In this way you will banish a desire without making it pleasurable for your soul."

Ja'far ibn Muhammad al-Sadiq said: "Whenever I am confronted with a desire, I look to my soul. If it displays desire, I give it something of it which is better than to deprive it, whereas if it hides its desire, and displays indifference to it, I punish it by abstaining, and do not give it anything at all." Such is the way to punish the soul for this hidden desire.

In sum, the man who renounces his desire for food only to fall prey to the desire which is ostentation, resembles a man who flees from a scorpion and takes refuge with a viper, for ostentation is more harmful than the desire for food.

A Discourse on Sexual Desire

Know that man has been made subject to sexual desire for two beneficial reasons. The first of these is that by knowing its delight he is able to draw an analogy which suggests to him what the delight of the Afterlife must be like. For the delight of the sexual act, were it to last, would be the greatest pleasure of the body, just as the pain of a burn is the body's greatest agony. Encouragement and deterrence (*al-targhiw wa'l-tarhib*), which drive people towards their saving happiness, can only be brought about by means of palpable pain and pleasure, since what cannot be perceived through experience will never be greatly desired. The second reason is that it allows the human race to continue and the world (*alam*) to abide. Such are its benefits.

However, sexual desire also contains evils which may destroy both religion and the world if not controlled and subjugated, and restored to a state of equilibrium. It has been said that His word: "...Our Lord, do not subject us to more than we can bear..." (Surah 2 verse 286) refers, when correctly interpreted to powerful lust.

Someone once said: "The devil says to woman: 'You are half my army! You are my arrow with which I do not miss! You are my confidante! You are my messenger with whom I achieve my wants!' Thus half of his army is desire, the other half being anger."

The desire for women, which is the greatest of all desires, is susceptible to excess, defect and equilibrium. Excess obtains when the intellect is overcome, so that a man's concern is so distracted towards the enjoyment of women and slavegirls that he is unable to tread the path of the Afterlife; or it may overcome a man's religion, so that he is drawn into obscene activities. This may become so extreme in some cases that two foul habits are acquired. Firstly, he may partake of something which makes him desirous to have intercourse more often, just as some people take certain drugs which strengthen the stomach and allow them to eat more of the things which they desire.

This resembles nothing so much as man tormented by savage beasts

and snakes which sleep from time to time, but which he finds methods of awakening and arousing, and then has to make his peace with. For the desires for food and intercourse are in reality pains, which a man would rather be free of so as to gain another form of delight. Should you object that it has been narrated in a *gharib* Tradition that the Messenger of God said: "I have complained to Gabriel that I would like more strength when having intercourse with my wives, and he instructed me to eat harisa," then you should know that he had nine wives, and he was obliged to satisfy them all, and that no one was permitted to marry them after his death, or even if he divorced them; his request for strength was therefore for this, and not for enjoyment.

The second thing is that in the case of some misguided people this desire may end in amorous passion (*ishq*), which constitutes utter ignorance of the intended purpose of sexual congress, and a descent to a lower level than that of the animals. For such people are not content merely to gratify their lust, which is the unsightliest of all desires and the one of which a man should be most embarrassed, but instead believe that their lust can only be satisfied by one person. An animal finds it enough to satisfy its lust anywhere it can, whereas these people will only be satisfied with one person in particular, which thing heaps abasement upon abasement, and enslavement upon enslavement, until their intellects are subordinated to the service of their cravings, even though the intellect has been created to be obeyed, not to obey desires and devise means of gratifying them. Amorous passion is nothing but a wellspring of excessive sexual desire, and it is the disease of an empty and unconcerned heart. One should be on one's guard against its preliminaries by abstaining from repeated glances and thoughts. Otherwise, it will take firm hold of one and be difficult to shake off. In this it resembles the passion which certain people harbour for wealth, status, land and children, or even for playing with birds, lutes, backgammon or chess, all of which may possess them to such a degree that their religious and worldly lives are adulterated and they are unable ever to abstain from them.

Excess in the matter of sexual desire, then, causes the intellect to be overcome to this degree, which is very much to be condemned. Insufficient sexual desire, however, leads to an indifference to women, or to giving them insufficient pleasure, which is also to be condemned. Sexual desire is a praiseworthy thing when it stands in a state of equilibrium, obedient to the intellect and the Law in all its movements. Whenever it becomes excessive, it should be broken with hunger and marriage. The Prophet said: "O young men! You should marry, and whoever cannot should fast, for fasting is a form of castration."

An Exposition on the Aspirant's Obligations Regarding the Renunciation or Undertaking of Marriage

Know that at the outset the aspirant should not occupy his heart and his soul with marriage, for this would distract him very seriously from treading the Path, and would cause him to find solace in his wife, and all who find solace in other than God must necessarily be distracted from Him. You should not be deceived by the fact that the Messenger of God (peace and prayers be upon him) married frequently, for the entire world could not have distracted his heart from God; one cannot compare angels to prison wardens. In this way, Abou Sulayman al Darani said: "Whoever marries has inclined toward the world." He also remarked: "I have never known an aspirant to marry and retain his former state." And when he was once told: "How greatly you need a woman in whom you can take solace!" He replied: "May God not grant me solace in her!" for that would bar him from finding solace in God Almighty. He likewise said: "Everything which distracts you from God, whether it be family, property or children, is an ill omen for you." How then, could one draw such an analogy in the case of the Messenger of God (peace and prayers be upon him) whose burning love of God so engulfed him that he feared that it might overflow upon his physical body and destroy it? For this reason, because of his frame's insufficient capacity, he would at times slap the thigh of Aisha and say: "Talk to me Aisha!" so as to be distracted by her words from the overwhelming nature of his state. Intimacy with God

Almighty was part of his nature, while his intimacy with His creatures was temporary, and a form of clemency to his body. He found his perseverance in sitting with God's creatures hard to bear, and would say: "Relieve us with it, Bilal!" in order to return to that which was his true delight. A weak person, observing how his circumstances were in such matters, will be deceived, since no mind can comprehend the secret wisdom behind his acts (peace and prayers be upon him).

Accordingly, it is a condition that the aspirant remain celibate at the outset, until such time as his gnosis becomes well established. This, however, is the case only if he is not overcome by desire. If he is so overcome he should break it with constant hunger and fasting. Should his desire still not be subjugated, and he finds himself unable to restrain his eyes, for instance, even if he is able to preserve his chastity, then for him marriage is the better state, for it will quieten his desire. Otherwise, to the extent that he cannot restrain his eyes he will be unable to restrain his thoughts, and his concentration will be destroyed; he may even be tried with something beyond his capacity. The fornication of the eye is one of the major venial faults, and soon leads on to a mortal and obscene sin, which is the fornication of the flesh. The man who is unable to turn away his eyes will not be able to safeguard himself against being unchaste.

Jesus (peace be upon him) said: "Beware of glances, for they sow desire in the heart, which is temptation enough."

Said ibn Jubayr said: "Temptation came to David (peace be upon him) merely through a glance. Therefore he told his son (Solomon) (peace be upon him): "O my son! Walk behind a lion or a black cobra, but never walk behind a woman."

John (the Baptist) (peace be upon him) was once asked: "How does fornication begin?" and he replied: "With looking and wishing."

Al Fudail said: "Satan says: 'It is my ancient bow, and my arrow with which I do not miss,' referring to looking."

And the Messenger of God (peace and prayers be upon him) said: "A

gaze is a poisoned arrow from Satan. Whoever abstains from it in fear of God shall receive from Him increase in faith, the sweetness of which he will feel in his heart.”

He (peace and prayers be upon him) also said: “I leave behind me no temptation more damaging to men than that of women.”

And he (peace and prayers be upon him) said: “Beware of the temptation of this world and the temptation of women, for truly, the first temptation of the sons of Israel was through women.”

God Almighty says: “Tell the believing men to lower their gaze...” to the end of the verse.

And the Prophet (peace and prayers be upon him) said: “Every son of Adam has his share of fornication. The eyes fornicate, and do so by looking. The hands fornicate, and do so by touching. The feet fornicate, and do so by walking. The mouth fornicates, and does so by kissing. And the heart forms thoughts and wishes, which the genitals confirm or deny.”

Umm Salamah said: “Ibn Maktoum, the blind man, once asked leave of the Messenger of God (peace and prayers be upon him) to enter while I was sitting with Maymuna. The Prophet asked us to go behind a screen, and we asked: “Is he not blind and unable to see us?” And he replied: “Do you not see him?” This shows that it is not lawful for women to sit with blind men, as has become the custom today at banquets and funeral assemblies. A blind man is forbidden to be alone with women, and no woman may sit with a blind man or gaze at him without reason. It is only lawful for women to speak to men and to look at them for purposes of general necessity.

Now, it may also be the case that a man is able to keep his eyes from women, but not from adolescent boys, and for him too it is better to marry. For the case of boys is even more damaging, since if a man’s heart inclines to a woman he may at least render her lawful to him by marrying her. To look with desire at the face of a boy is forbidden; in fact, everyone whose heart is affected by the form of beautiful boys to the extent

that he senses that they are different from bearded adults, is forbidden to look at them. Should you say: “Everyone who has any perception necessarily knows the difference between someone who is beautiful and someone who is ugly, and yet the faces of young boys remain unveiled.” I would reply that I do not mean the mere distinction made by the eye, which resembles the distinction which one might make between a green tree and a desiccated one, between pure and polluted water, or a bush bearing blossoms and another denuded of leaves; one inclines towards the former in each case both with one’s eye and one’s nature, but in a fashion that is quite devoid of sexual desire, for one does not desire to touch and kiss flowers, or sources of light, or pure water. Likewise is the case with handsome old men, to whom one’s eye may incline, and know the difference between them and old men who are ugly, but without any intrusion of desire. This may be recognised in one’s inclination towards proximity and touching, to the extent that a man detects this inclination in his heart, and perceives the distinction between a handsome face and pleasant plants, embroidered garments, and girded ceilings, his regard is concupiscent, and therefore forbidden.

This is a matter in which people are careless, and which drags them into destruction without their noticing. One of the Companions said: “A wild lion is less to be feared in the case of a youth given to worship than his sitting with an adolescent boy.” Sufian remarked: “If a man so much as plays with two toes of a boy for the sake of lust, he is a sodomite.” One of the Righteous Ancestors said: “There shall be three kinds of sodomites in this nation, those who look, those who hold hands and those who act.”

To gaze at adolescents is therefore a very serious matter. To the extent that an aspirant is unable to lower his eyes and control his thoughts, the appropriate thing is that he should break his desire by marrying, for there are many souls whose cravings cannot be subdued through hunger.

Someone once said: “At the outset of my aspirancy I was unbearably oppressed by sexual desire. For a long time I beseeched God Almighty

until I saw someone in a dream. He asked me what was the nature of my complaint, and I informed him. "Come here", he told me, and I did so. He then placed his hand upon my chest, and I felt its coolness in my heart and in all my body. When I awoke, my condition was at an end, and I remained free from it for a year. When it returned, I sought help once more from God, until someone again came to me in a dream, saying: "Would you like your state to be removed on the condition that I chop off your head?" "Yes" I told him. "The lean forward", he said, and when I did so he drew a sword of light and cut off my head. When I awoke, the condition had ended, and again I was free from it for a year. Finally it returned to me even more powerfully, and again I saw someone standing directly before me. He said: "Wretch! How many times have you asked God to remove that which He does not like to remove?" And so I married, and the state departed from me at last, and I was given children."

However much an aspirant may need to marry, he should not forsake the stipulations of aspirancy, either when he is first married or later on. When he is newly wed, he should respect them by having a correct intention, while during the course of his married life he should do so by means of goodness of character and behaviour, and respecting the rights which God Almighty has granted to women and which, since we have detailed them in the Book of Marriage, we will not commit prolixity by reiterating. It is a sign of sincerity in aspirancy that one marry a woman who is poor but religious, rather than seeking after a wealthy one. Someone once said: "The man who marries a rich woman will find five things in her, an expensive dowry, a delayed wedding, a lack of service, constant expense and an inability to divorce her should he wish to do so, because of his fear of losing her money. The case of a poor woman, however, is quite the opposite." And someone else remarked: "A wife should be beneath her husband in four things or else she will despise him: age, height, wealth and lineage. She should be better than him in four others: beauty, manners, character and scrupulousness in matters of religion."

The mark of sincere aspirancy in married life is good character. A cer-

tain aspirant once married a woman whom he served so constantly that she was embarrassed and complained to her father: "I am quite bewildered by this man, I have been in his house for years, and not once have I gone to the privy without his arriving there before me with the water."

Another aspirant married a woman of great beauty, who shortly before the wedding was afflicted with the smallpox. Her family were besides themselves with grief, and feared that he would no longer find her beautiful. Instead, however, he pretended to them that he himself had been afflicted with ophthalmia, and then that he had gone quite blind, so that when she was given to him in marriage her family were no longer distressed. He continued in this way for twenty years until at last, when she died, he opened his eyes. When questioned about what he had done, he said: "I did it deliberately so that her family would not be grieved." He was told: "You have outrun all your brethren through your goodness of character."

Another Sufi once married a bad tempered woman, and endured her company patiently. When asked why he did not divorce her, he replied: "I am afraid that someone might marry her who is unable to tolerate her, and will suffer accordingly."

This is how an aspirant should be when he marries. But should he be able to forsake marriage, then this would be more appropriate, on condition that he is incapable of combining the merit which lies in marriage with his wayfaring on the Path, and that he be aware that marriage would distract him. In this way, it is told that Mohammad ibn Sulayman al Hashimi, whose daily revenues on his worldly investments amounted to eighty thousands dirhems, once sent a letter to the people and scholars of Basrah, asking whether they knew of a woman whom he could marry.

They all concurred that Rabia al Adawiya (may God have mercy on her) should be the one. And he wrote to her in this way: "In the Name of God, Most Compassionate and Merciful! To proceed. God Almighty has given me income of eighty thousand dinars every day out of the things of this world, and it will not be long before this becomes a full hundred

thousand, of which I shall give you riches in proportion, so accept my offer!" And she wrote back as follows: "In the Name of God, Most Compassionate and Merciful! To proceed.

The renunciation of this world brings tranquility to the heart and body alike, whereas to desire it brings worry and grief. When you receive this letter of mine, then prepare your provisions, and address yourself to your fate. Be the counselor of your own soul, and let not other men be your counselors, lest they divide up your wealth. Fast without cease, and break your fast with death. As for myself, were God Almighty to give me many times what He has given you, I would not be happy to be distracted from Him for the blinking of an eye."

This is an indication that everything that distracts one from God is a shortcoming; let, therefore, the aspirant scrutinise his condition and his heart, should he find that these are at peace in bachelorhood, then thus should he remain, whereas if they are not, and he cannot render them so, then it is better that he marries. The cure for this weakness is threefold, hunger, lowering the gaze, and busying oneself with some activity that will come to prevail in the heart. Should these three things be of no avail, then only marriage will cure the matter at its root.

It was for this reason the the Righteous Ancestors made haste to marry, and to marry off their daughters. Said ibn al Musayyib said: "Satan never despairs of anyone until he has endeavored to tempt hi through women." And ibn Al Musayyid said at the age of eighty four when he had lost the use of one eyes, and was almost blind i the other: "In my opinion, women are to be feared more than anything else."

Abd Allah ibn Abi Wada'a related: "I used to attend the assemblies of Said ibn al Musayyib, who once noticed my absence for a few days. When I returned, he enquired where I had been, and I replied that my wife had died and that I had been occupied on that account. He said: "If only you had told me so that I could have attended her funeral." I then made to rise and he asked: "Have you married again?" "God have mercy upon you!" I said, "Who would allow me to marry his daughter, since I

possess no more than two or three dirhems?" "I would." He said. "Would you do that?" I asked, and he replied: "Certainly." And he praised God Almighty and called down blessings upon the Prophet (peace and prayers be upon him) and married me to her for a dowry of two dirhems."

Beside myself with joy, I got to my feet and went to my house, where I started to think whom I could ask for things, and from whom I could borrow. After attending the Sunset prayer, I went home again, and lit a lantern. I had been fasting, and my supper, consisting of bread and oil, was brought to me to break my fast on. Suddenly I heard a knock on the door. "Who is that?" I asked, and a voice answered: "Said." I thought of all the people I knew called Said, except Said ibn al Musayyib, since for forty years he had been seen nowhere except in his house and at the mosque. I went out and there was Said ibn al Musayyib. I imagined that some idea had occurred to him, and I said: "O Abou Mohammad! Had you only sent for me I would have come to you instead!" "No," he said, "It is more correct that I visit you." "What can I do for you?" I asked, and he replied: "You were a single man to whom I gave my daughter in marriage, and I was reluctant to make you spend this night alone. Here is your wife." And there she was, standing close behind him. He took her hand, guided her through the door, and then closed it, following which the woman fell to the ground out of shyness. I made sure the door was closed, and then went to the bowl of bread and oil and put it where the lamp's rays did not penetrate, lest she see it.

Then I went up to the roof, and threw some pebbles to attract the attention of my neighbours. When they came and asked what was the matter, I said: "Said ibn al Musayyib today gave me the hand of his daughter, and came unexpectedly this evening!" Said married her to you?" they asked, and I said: "Yes!." "And she is in your house?" They enquired, and I replied that she was, at which they went down to her.

My mother was informed, and she arrived and said: "May I never see your face again if you touch her before I have spent three days reconciling her to me!" And so I waited three days before consummating the un-

ion, and found her to be surpassingly beautiful, and even more erudite than anyone in the Book of God and the Precedent (*Sunnah*) of His Messenger (peace and prayers be upon him), and well aware of the rights of her husband. After spending a month without either visiting Said or being visited by him, I went to see him. He was sitting in his circle, and, once I had greeted him, and he had returned my greeting, he spoke to me no more until the people had dispersed. "How is that person?" he asked. I told him: "Very well, Abou Mohammad, as a friend would love and an enemy hate." He said: "Should you find anything doubtful in that person then the disobedient one is yours to deal with!" And after I had returned home he sent me a gift of twenty thousand dirhems.

Abd Allah ibn Sulayman remarked: "She had already received a proposal from the Caliph Abd al Malik ibn Marwan on behalf of his son al Walid when he made him his heir apparent, but Said had refused. As a result, Abd al Malik had taken endless measures against him, until he had him flogged with a hundred stripes on a cold day, and then had a jug of water poured over him and forced him to wear a woolen shirt."

Said's haste on that night to complete the marriage should inform you of the hazardous nature of sexual desire, and of the necessity in the eyes of the religion of speedily extinguishing its flames through marriage. May God be pleased with him, and show him mercy!

The Fourth Book

The Evil of the Tongue

An Exposition on the Great Danger of the Tongue and the Virtue of Silence

Know that the danger of the tongue is so great, there is no surety from its risk except in silence. For this reason the Shariah praises silence and encourages the use of it. The Prophet (peace and prayers be upon him) said: "Silence is wisdom, and few are those who practice it."

Sahl ibn Saad al Sa'aidy said: "The Prophet said: 'Whoever can guarantee the chastity of what is between his two jaw bones and what is between his two legs, I guarantee Paradise for him'."

Abou Hurayrah said that the Prophet said: "Whoever believes in God and the Last Day should talk good sense or keep silence."

It was said to Jesus (peace be upon him) "Guide us to a deed which will admit us to Paradise." He said: "Do not utter anything ever." They said: "We cannot do that." So he said: "Then do not utter anything except good."

Soloman Ibn David (peace be upon him) said:

"If speech is from silver, silence is golden."

In the sayings of the Companions Abou Bakr (may God be pleased with him) used to put a pebble in his mouth to prevent himself speaking, and he used to point to his tongue and say this is the thing which will send me to the place I do not like.

Abd Allah ibn Masoud said: "By God, there is no god but He, there is nothing which needs lengthy imprisonment more than the tongue."

Tawous said: "My tongue is a lion, if I let it free it will eat me."

If you say that these are great virtues of silence, then what is the reason for saying that? Know that the answer lies in the many evils of the

tongue from wronging and lying, backbiting and slander, hypocrisy and suspicion, indecency and dissembling, self praise, vain talk, quarreling, intrusiveness and misinterpretation, exaggerating and diminishing, harming the people, scandalising the honour, these are the evils which the tongue vies towards without hesitation and are so sweet to the heart. The incentives to it are the ill habits of the person and the promptings of Satan. The one who engages in it, will never be able to hold his tongue, so he lets it loose to what he likes and holds it from what he does not like. This is a mystery to science, as in the engagement of any of these evils there are great dangers, and in silence there is safety. For this reason its virtues are so great.

God Almighty has said: "Not a word does he utter, but there is an observer ever ready." (Surah 50 verse 18)

The Evils of the Tongue

1. Speaking of things which are none of one's own concern.

The Prophet said: "It is from a person's good observance of Islam to refrain from what does not concern him."

2. Intrusiveness.

Amr ibn Dinar said: "A man spoke too much in the presence of the Prophet, the Prophet said to him: 'How many veils are there over your tongue?' He answered: 'My lips and teeth.' So the Prophet said: 'None of these would stop your speech?'"

3. Engaging in vain talk

The Prophet said: "The man may utter a word to amuse those sitting with him, without thinking of its gravity, and because of that he will be thrown into the Hell Fire.

Salman said: "The greatest sinners on the Day of Judgment are those who speak to much on forbidden matters.

4. Hypocrisy and argument

These are prohibited. The Prophet said: "Do not be a hypocrite to your brother, nor mock him, nor make him a promise and fail in it."

Malik ibn Anas (may God have mercy upon him) said: "Those who argue are not religious people." He also said: "Hypocrisy hardens the heart and produces malice."

5. Quarreling

Quarreling is blameworthy and is the cause of malice and argument.

The mother of the believers, Aisha (may God be pleased with her) said about it: "The Prophet said: 'The most hated person to God is the one who quarrels incessantly.'"

6. Pompous talk

The Prophet said: "I and the pious ones of my nation are free of those

who are pompous.” And he also said: “The most hated one of you to me and the one who is distanced from me is the prattler who poses with pompous talk and drawls in his speech.”

7. Indecency, insult and foul mouthedness

This is blameworthy and prohibited, it stems from wickedness and depravity.

The Prophet said: “Eschew indecency as God Almighty does not like indecency or obscenity.”

And he also said: “The believer is not one who refutes, or curses, or speaks of indecency or obscenity or has a foul mouth.”

And he also said: “Insulting a believer is wickedness and fighting him is pagancy.”

And he said: “The greatest of all sins is that a man insults his parents.” They said: “O Prophet how would a man insult his parents?” He said: “He insults the father of a man so the other will insult his father in return.”

8. Cursing

It is either animal or solid or human, and all these are blameworthy.

The Prophet said: “The believer is not one who curses.”

Cursing is expelling and distancing away from God Almighty, and this is not permissible except for those who have committed something which distances them away from God Almighty, such as unbelief and oppression. It is permissible to say the curse of God is on the oppressors and the unbelievers.

9. Singing and poetry

We have mentioned in the Book of Audition what is prohibited of singing and what is lawful of it. So we will not repeat it here.

As for poetry, its beautiful wording is good and its ugly wording is bad, but to do it as a profession is blameworthy.

The Prophet said: “For any of you to fill his insides with pus is better for you than to fill it with poetry.”

10. Jest

It is blameworthy and prohibited except a minor part of it which is exempt from prohibition.

The Prophet said: “Do not tease your brother nor jest with him.”

11. Ridiculing and mocking

The meaning of ridicule is to look down at and despise a person, and to draw his attention to his shortcomings and faults in a manner which mocks him. This could be by deeds and actions or in speech, or by motioning or indicating. If this is done in the presence of the person being mocked it is not backbiting, while it is in essence backbiting.

This is prohibited for the one who feels its harm, but if a person mocks himself, and may be pleased in it, then the mockery is jesting.

12. Betraying a confidence

Betraying a confidence has been forbidden because of the harm it causes to friends and acquaintances. The Prophet said: “If a man tells another a secret, then looks away, so he has been entrusted with it.”

13. False promises

Indeed the tongue vies in making promises, while the self knows that he cannot fulfill it, then the promise has been broken. This is a sign of hypocrisy. God Almighty said: “O you who believe, fulfill the pledges.” (Surah 5 verse 1)

14. Swearing upon a lie

It is the Ugliest sin, and the worst abomination of the faults.

The Prophet said: “The worst betrayal is that you talk to your brother about something and he believes you while you are lying.”

Ibn Massoud said: “The Prophet said: ‘The person lies persistently until it has been written with God that he is a liar’.”

As for the sayings of the Companions, Ali ibn Abou Talib (may God

be pleased with him) said: “The most heinous sin in the sight of God is the lying tongue and the worst remorse is the remorse on the Day of Judgment.”

Umar ibn Abd Al Aziz (may God have mercy upon him) said: “I have never lied a lie since I wore the *izar* (waist wrapper).”

15. Backbiting

God Almighty has said: “...nor backbite each other, would any of you like to eat the flesh of his dead brother? You would abhor it...” (Surah 49 verse 12)

16. Slander

God Almighty has said: “Defamer, going about with slander.” (Surah 68 verse 11) Then He said: “Violent and cruel, moreover an illegitimate.” (Surah 68 verse 13)

The Prophet said: “The slanderer will never be admitted to Paradise.”

17. Two faced talk

The person who engages in two faced talk is the one who faces two adversaries, and talks with each of them on what each one agrees to. This is true hypocrisy.

Amar ibn Yassar said: “The Prophet said: ‘The one who is two faced in this world, on the Day of Judgment will have two tongues of fire’.”

18. Praising

Umar (may God be pleased with him) said: “Praising is slaughter.”

19. Insensitivity

The Prophet said: “None of you should say: ‘If God pleases and if you please’, but let him say ‘If God pleases then you please’.”

20. Gossip

It was related that the Prophet forbade gossip, wasting money and excessive questioning. The Prophet said: “People persist in questioning until they say: ‘God has created the people, then who has created God?’ So

if they say that, then say: ‘He is God, the One and the Only, the Eternal Cause of all being...until you end the Surah’, then let him spit on his left side three times and seek refuge in God from the curse of Satan.”

These prohibitory measures of Islam are meant for the moral and material benefit as well as the spiritual and mental uplift of individuals and the community. These prohibitory instructions are based on extreme wisdom and do not deprive one of anything good or useful, in fact they do a lot of good to a person by protecting his interests against harmful and injurious things, by developing in him or her a refined taste for the good and better things in life and a greater regard for higher moral values.

The Fifth Book

The Condemnation of Anger, Rancour and Envy

An Exposition on the Condemnation of Anger

God Almighty said: “While the unbelievers set in their hearts fierceness, the fierceness of paganism, God sent down His serenity upon His Messenger and the believers...” (Surah 48 verse 26).

God Almighty condemns the unbelievers for what they have shown of angry vehemence for the sake of falsehood, and He praises the believers for what He has sent down upon them of serenity.

Abou Hurayrah related that a man said: “O Prophet, command me to do something in a few words.” The Prophet (peace and prayers be upon him) said: “Do not get angry.” The man repeated his question. So the Prophet said: “Do not get angry.”

Ibn Massoud said: “The Prophet said: ‘How do you judge the strongest one among you?’ They said, ‘He would be the one who no man can defeat.’ He said: ‘Not that, but he is the one who can control himself from anger.’”

Al Hassan said: “O son of Adam, every time you get angry you jump until you will jump into the Fire.”

Some of them have said: “Keep away from anger, it will lead you to the humiliation of apology.”

Umar (may God be pleased with him) used to say in his speech: “Successful is he who is kept away from greed, lusts and anger.”

It was said to Abd Allah ibn Al Mubarak: “Describe the best attribute to us in a word?” He said: “To eschew anger.”

An Exposition on the Treatment for Anger

Anger is treated by a mixture of knowledge and deeds. As for knowledge it is as follows:

1. One should reflect upon the virtues of swallowing anger, pardoning, forbearance and tolerance, in hope of the reward for these virtues, so that eagerness for them would deter avenge and revenge so that rage would be quenched.
2. One should endue oneself with a fear of God's punishment, while saying: "The power of God over me is greater than my power over so and so." If I turn my anger upon him, I would not guarantee that God will not be angry with me on the Day of Judgment, so I am the one in need of pardon."
3. One should warn oneself from the consequences of enmity and revenge and endue in oneself the fear of the consequences of anger in this life if he is not in fear of the Hereafter.
4. One should think how ugly he would look when he is angry, and that he should remember the look of the others when they are angry. One should try to imitate the forbearing, calm person who eschews anger in the way of the Prophet, the righteous, the knowledgeable and wise people.
5. Let him reflect on the cause of his anger and which prompts him to revenge and prevents him from swallowing his rage. There must be a reason for that as Satan tells him: "If you do not revenge you will be deemed weak and humiliated and the people will look down at you!" So he should say to himself: "How strange you are, you do not want to tolerate today, and you do not fear the humiliation of the Day of Judgment! You caution me from being humiliated in the eyes of the people and you are not cautious from being humiliated before God Almighty, the angels, and the Prophets."

As for deeds, you should say with your tongue: "I seek refuge in God from the accursed Satan."

If your anger still does not abate, then you should sit down if you are standing, or lie down if you are sitting, and draw closer to the earth from which you were created, so that you will know the humiliation of your-

self. This is because heat is the cause of anger, and motion is the cause of heat. If the anger still does not abate then you should make ablution with cold water.

It was narrated that Umar (may God be pleased with him) was angry one day, so he asked for water, then he rinsed his nose with it, and he said that anger is from Satan and this abates it.

The Excellence of Forbearance

Know that forbearance is better than swallowing rage, because swallowing rage is just an attempt at forbearance. To swallow rage means that a person is already excited and angry and in it is a great struggle, but if he accustoms himself to that, it becomes a habit so he will not be excited or angry. If he gets angry he will not find difficulty in swallowing it and that is true forbearance.

Abou Hurayrah said: "The Prophet said: "Seek high rank with God Almighty." They said: "What is it O Messenger of God?" He said: "Join your relation with the one who severed it, and give to the one who deprived you, and be forbearing with the one who does not know of your forbearance."

Al Hasan said regarding the following verse in which God Almighty said: "And if the ignorant address them, they say 'peace'," they are forbearing when the ignorant addressed them."

Umar (may God be pleased with him) said: "Learn knowledge, and learn for the knowledge forbearance and serenity."

Luqman said: "Three will not be known except in three, the forbearing person will not be known except in anger, the brave will not be known except in war, and the true brother will not be known except when you need him."

The Virtues of Pardoning and Doing Good

Know that the meaning of pardon is that someone owes another a right, then he drops his right. This right, can be of retribution, a fine or a

redemption. It differs from forbearance and the swallowing of anger.

God Almighty said: “Be pardoning, enjoin what is right and excuse the ignorant.” (Surah 7 verse 199)

High Exalted also said: “...and to pardon is akin to piety...” (Surah 2 verse 237).

The Prophet said: “By the One in whose hand is my life, if I was in the habit of swearing I would have sworn on three: charity will never diminish wealth, so give in charity, a man who has pardoned an oppression seeking the pleasure of God, God will increase his might on the Day of Judgment, a man finds it an easy way to live by asking, God will open the door of poverty for him.”

Ibrahim Al Timi said: “A man wronged me so I had mercy on him.” This is the doing of good which is next to pardoning.

The Virtues of Kindness

Know that kindness is praiseworthy. Kindness is the fruit of good manner. The Prophet said: “O Aisha, the one who has been given his share of kindness he has been given his share of the best of this life and the Hereafter, and whoever has been deprived of his share of kindness he has been deprived from his share of the best of this life and the Hereafter.”

He also said: “Whoever is deprived of kindness, has been deprived of all goodness.”

Condemnation of Envy

Its Truth, Causes, Treatment and the Obligation of Removing it

An Exposition on the Condemnation of Envy

Know that envy is also a result of rancour, and rancour is a result of anger, and anger is its origin.

Envy has countless condemned branches.

The Prophet said: "Envy devours rewards as fire devours firewood." And he also said in prohibiting envy, its causes and its fruit: "Do not envy each other, and do not sever relations between each other, and do not hate each other, and do not plot against each other, and be brothers as servants of God."

The Prophet said: "The disease of the people before you is crawling towards you: envy and hatred. Hatred is the one which has shaved, I do not say the one who shaved her hair, but the one who shaved her religion. By the One in whose hand Mohammad's life is held, you will not be admitted to Paradise until you believe, and you will not believe until you love each other. Shall I tell you of that which ensures this for you? Spread peace between you."

As for the sayings of the Companions, some of the righteous ancestors said: "The first sin was envy: the envy of Iblis to Adam for his high rank, so he refused to prostrate to him, and he incited him to commit sin."

Abou Al Darda'a said: "The more any servant remembers death, his joy decreases and his envy decreases!"

A Bedouin said: "I have not seen an oppressor such as the one who has been oppressed by an envier, he sees the blessing upon you as vengeance upon himself."

An Exposition on the Cause of Envy and Competition

1. Enmity and hatred: This is the most ardent cause for envy.
2. The Exultation: Making difficulty in exulting himself above others, so if somebody like him has been given position or knowledge, or wealth, he fears that the others will be exulted over him and he can not tolerate their exultation nor can he tolerate their pride over him.
3. Conceit: He is of the habit of being proud and looking down at another uses him and expects him to follow him in his purpose. So if he gains any blessing he fears that he will not tolerate his pride and he will exult himself from following him. From conceit and exultation was the envy of most of the pagans to the Prophet, as they said how can an orphan be preferred to us, and how can we condescend, so they said, "If only this Qur'an had been revealed to some great man of the two towns". (Surah 43 verse 31)
4. Wonder in suspicion: As God has told us about the nations before us when they said: "You are only mortals like us..." (Surah 36 verse 15) They also said: "Shall we believe in two men like ourselves.." (Surah 23 verse 47).

So they were wondering how the one was awarded the rank of prophethood and nearness to God Almighty was a human like themselves, so they envied him and wished that the prophethood be taken from them.
5. Fear of losing out in competition to others: This is related to two who compete for one thing, each of them envies the other for any help that might enable him to win.
6. Love of bossiness and grandeur: The person who loves to be praised for no reason and he wants to make the people believe that he is unique and no one compares to him in this world. So if he hears that there is someone like himself, or better, or more dignified, he will be miserable and wishes for that person to die or for the blessings to be lost to him.

7. The niggardly and corrupted soul: He does not wish for any good to come to the believers, and if someone mentions in his presence that someone else has been blessed and in a better condition than he, his chest is straitened.

An Exposition on the Treatment which Dispels the Disease of Envy from the Heart

Know that envy is of the horrendous diseases of the heart. The disease of the heart can only be treated by knowledge and deeds.

The knowledge which is useful in treating envy is to have certainty that envy is harmful to you in the life and in religion.

As to it being harmful to you in religion, it is that by envy you are angry for the fate which God Almighty has decreed, and that you have hated the bounty that He has distributed among his servants, and His justice which He has ordained in His dominion in all wisdom. So the envier has denied that and despised it. This is a great sin towards the Oneness of God Almighty.

As to the harm it has for you in the life, it is that you feel tortured by it in the life, and you continuously grieve over what God has given from His bounty to your enemies. Every time you see it you feel pain.

The scientific treatment for this: Whenever the human thinks upon it with an open mind and an alert heart, the fire of envy will be extinguished from his heart, and he will be aware that he is destroying himself and pleasing his enemy, and gaining the wrath of his Lord and straitning his life.

As to the useful deeds: this is that he controls his envy, whatever envy occurs whether by words or deeds, he should oblige himself to do the opposite.

This is the treatment for envy and is extremely useful, however bitter it is for the heart, its benefit is in its bitter medicine.

The Sixth Book

The Condemnation of Worldliness

An Exposition on the Condemnation of Worldliness

The verses which appear in the Qur'an regarding the condemnation of worldliness are many, the Qur'an urges mankind away from evil and invites them to the Hereafter, this was the purpose of all Prophets (peace be upon them) and they were not sent for any reason other than that, there is no need for us to provide evidence from the Qur'an for this, as is it so well known and clear, but we are going mention here some of the (*al-akhbar*) Traditions (sayings of the Prophet). It was related that the Prophet (peace and prayers be upon him) passed by a dead sheep and said: "Do you see this sheep how insignificant it is to its owner?" They said: "They threw it away because of its worthlessness." He said: "By The One in whose Hand my life is, the life of this world is more worthless to God Almighty than this sheep is to its owner. Had this life been, in the sight of God, worth the wing of a gnat, He would never have given the unbeliever as much as a drink of water from it." He also said: "The life of this world is the chief cause of every sin."

Jesus (peace be upon him) said: "Do not take this world as a lord otherwise it will take you as a slave. Keep your treasures with the One who does not lose it, the one who has the treasures of this world worries about pestilence, but the one who has the treasures of God does not worry from affliction."

They related that when Adam descended to earth, God High Exalted said: "The son of destruction is born to perish."

Jesus (peace be upon him) said: "Who is the one who builds a house upon the waves of the sea? Such is the life of this world, so do not take it as a settled place."

Jesus (peace be upon him) said: "O you disciples, accept less in this life and be secure in your religion the same way the people of this world

have accepted less of religion to secure this life.”

Al Hasan said: “God Almighty has mercy upon people to whom the world was a trust, so they paid it back to the One who entrusted them with it, and they departed unburdened.”

Malik ibn Dinar said: “As much as you store for the life of this world, worries about the Hereafter go out from your heart, and as much as you store for the Hereafter the worries of the world go out of your heart.” This was acquired from what Ali (may God honour his face) has said: “The world and the Hereafter are in conflict with each other, as much as you please one, the other will be angered.”

Dawoud al Ta’ai (may God be pleased with him) said: “O son of Adam! You rejoice in achieving your hope but you only reached it in your passing away. Besides you have delayed your deed as if its benefit was for someone other than yourself.”

An Exposition on the Quality of this Life

Know that the life of this world is transitory. Its duration is fleeting, it promises eternity but fails in its tryst, you look at it and it seems settled while it is in great motion, it is departing with speed, but the one who looks at it may not feel its movement so he relaxes in it, he will only feel it when it reaches the end. It is like the shadow moving unperceived, actually moving while its appears stationary. You cannot see its movement with the sight of the eyes but you perceive it by inner discernment.

It was related that the world was revealed to Jesus (peace be upon him) and he saw it in a form of an old toothless woman adorned in every type of finery, so he said to her: “How many did you marry?” She answered: “Countless numbers.” He said: “Did they all die from you or did they all divorce you?” She replied: “I killed all of them.” So Jesus said: “Miserable are your remaining husbands, how is it that they take no notice of the fate of your former husbands! How you destroyed them one by one and they take no heed of you.”

Jesus (peace be upon him) said: “The similitude of the one who seeks this life is as the one who drinks sea water, the more he drinks, the more he thirsts until it kills him.”

Bishr ibn K'ab used to say: “Let us go to show you the life of this world!” Then he took them to the garbage heap, and said: “Look at their fruit and their chickens and their honey and their clarified butter.”

The Prophet said: “This worldly life as compared to the Hereafter is like the one who dips his finger into the water well, then let him see how much of it returns with him.”

Know that the similitude of the people in what they have been given of this life is like a man who builds his house and decorates it, then he invites people there in succession one after the other, one enters and he presents to him a golden plate on which is frankincense and sweet Basil to smell it and leave for the one to follow, but he imagined that it was given to him so he loved it and thought it was his own, so when it was taken away from him, he was angry and upset, but the one who knows that the man's intention was for him to smell it, thanked him and returned it with pleasure. Thus is the one who knows the ordinance of God in this life, he knows that it is a guest house opened only for passers by, not for residents, to take from it provision they need as the travelers and to take what is useful for them in their journey, all things to them are only transitory, so that they are not disappointed when they depart.

An Exposition on the Truth of this Life in Itself and its Distractions which Exhaust all Mankind's Efforts and causes them to Forget themselves and their Creator Who Sent them to it and who Returns them from it

The worldly works are professions, industries and business to which you see mankind devoted. The causes for mankind to do all this work are three: sustenance, housing, garments.

Through the works of mankind and their deeds to which they are devoted out of their necessity for sustenance and clothing they have forgot-

ten the cause of their being created and to where they will return, so they are lost. Their weak minds have been overtaken by corrupted imaginings so they divided in their beliefs and sects and they differed in their opinions in various ways. Some of them have been overcome by ignorance and heedlessness to the point that they do not open their eyes to see the consequences of their doings. They think that they are living to eat, not eating to live.

Others assert that they understand the life very well, and they say that mankind was not intended to work hard in this life, nor to enjoy it, but that happiness is that he takes from this life his share of the desires of this life which are the desires of the stomach and the desire of sex.

Others see that happiness is in making more money and their wealth will suffice them, so they spend their nights and days in making money, exhausted in traveling here and there in hard work gaining and collecting money. They do not eat except what is necessary, in a miserly way, fearing that it may diminish their wealth.

Others think that happiness is in having a good name which all tongues will repeat in praise and thanks, of how smartly dressed he looks, and his trappings of show. Such have exhausted themselves in making their living and straitened themselves in drinking and eating, while they spend all their wealth on handsome clothes and precious belongings, on various means of transportation, decorating the doors of their houses and everything the people's eyes might see so that it will be said - he is rich and a millionaire - and they think that this is happiness.

Others think that happiness is in their influence and dignity among the people, to lead the people to them in a humble and respectful way, so they exert their effort in drawing people to obey them. This is in their seeking a high ranking position so that their orders have to be enforced upon the people.

Other than the above mentioned there are many other groups, which number some seventy, all of them have been mislead and have mislead

others from the right path. But what dragged them on to all this is the necessity for sustenance, housing and clothing, and they have forgotten what these things were needed for and the amount which would be sufficient. This is the affair of the people who have indulged in the worldly life.

But only one group has taken heed, and renounced the life of this world, so Satan has envied them and did not leave them at peace until he mislead them in intention and they divided themselves into sects:

One sects thinks that the life is the home of trial and difficulty and the Hereafter is the home of happiness to everyone who arrives there regardless of whether he worships or not, they see the right way is to kill themselves to avoid the difficulties of this life. To this sect many of the worshipers of India have been led, so they throw themselves upon the fire to kill themselves by burning, thinking that this is the saving way from the difficulties of this life.

Other groups think that killing does not save but first it is necessary to kill all the human nature in themselves, and that happiness is in breaking desire and anger, then they strive earnestly and restrict themselves until some were destroyed because of the severity of the discipline, and other lost their reason and became insane. Some became ill so the way of worship was closed for them, some of them have failed in controlling the desires and thought that what the shariah had obliged upon them is impossible, and that shariah is an invention and so become atheist.

But to some of them it appears that all this effort is for God and that God Almighty does not need the worship of his servants nor will his rebelliousness diminish God in anything, nor the worship of anyone will increase God in anything, so they return to the desires and they follow the way of permissiveness and fold the shariah and the rules, they assert that is from the purity of their oneness as they think that God Almighty does not need the worship of His servants.

One sect thought the intention of worship is to strive hard until the servant reaches the knowledge of God Almighty, so if his knowledge is se-

cure, then he reaches this, and after his attainment he does not need the means to get there. Such left their striving and worship and asserted that their place in the knowledge of God is high and lofty and that they are above the obligations, obligations being only for the common people.

Behind that there are many false sects and grossly misleading ideas which would take too much time to enumerate. But of some seventy sects only one will be saved. This is the sect which is following the way which the Prophet and his Companions were upon, and they do not renounce life totally, nor do they kill the desires totally, but they take from the life only the necessary provision for their existence, and as to the desires they kill from it only what is not lawful and do not follow every whim or desire, nor do they renounce every desire but they follow only what is just and do not renounce everything in this world nor demand everything in this life. They know the intention of every thing created in this life and do not exceed the limits. They take of food what enables their bodies to perform worship and of habitation what protects from thieves and heat or cold, and of garments what is needed likewise, and when they fulfill their work they fulfill their worship, each in due proportion as God has ordained.

The Seventh Book

The Condemnation of Miserliness and Love of Wealth

An Exposition on the Condemnation of Wealth and Aversion for the Love of It

God Almighty said: “O you who believe! Let not your wealth nor your children divert you from the remembrance of God, and whoever does that, they are the losers.” (Surah 63 verse 9) and “Your wealth and your children are only a temptation, and with God is an immense reward.” (Surah 64 verse 15).

Whoever prefers his wealth and children to what is with God Almighty, he has suffered a great loss.

A man said: “O Messenger of God, why is it that I abhor death!” The Prophet (peace and prayers be upon him) said: “Do you have wealth?” He replied: “Yes, O Messenger of God.” He said: “Give away your money, surely the heart of the believer is with his wealth! If he gives it away he would love to join it, and if he left it behind he would love to be left behind with it.”

The Disciples said to Jesus (peace be upon him): “How can you walk upon water when we cannot do that?” He said to them: “What is the value of the dirhem and dinar to you?” They said: “Excellent.” He said: “But they both and the mud are equal to me.”

It was related that a man bothered Abou Darda' and did him harm, so he said: “Please God, give one who did me harm, a healthy body and prolong his life and increase his wealth.” See how he considered the increase in wealth, health and a prolonged life as the greatest trial. This is because these lead to tyranny.

It was said that when the dinar and dirhem were struck for the first time, Iblis (Satan) raised them up, kissed them and put them on his fore-

head saying: “Whoever loves you both, is truly my slave.”

An Exposition on Commending Wealth and the Combination of its Praiseworthiness and Blameworthiness

Know that God Almighty has equated wealth with good in several places in His Glorious Book, He High Exalted said: “If he has left good..”

The Prophet said: “Excellence is the good wealth for the good man.”

And all that has been mentioned concerning the reward for charity and pilgrimage commend wealth, as you can never attain charity and pilgrimage except by means of it.

The Prophet said: “Poverty is near to pagancy.”

Whoever knows the benefit in something and uses it to achieve his aims, then he has done well and benefited himself. Wealth is a tool and means to attain a good purpose, also it is possible to use wealth as a tool and means to attain a corrupt purpose, and it is that purpose which hinders from attaining the happiness of the Hereafter and impedes the way to knowledge and achievement. Thus it is both praiseworthy and blameworthy.

Since habits incline towards the desires which hinder the way to God and wealth is the tool which facilitates it, so the danger is great in its excess, the Prophets sought refuge in God Almighty from its evil to the point that our Prophet said: “Please God make the food of the house of Mohammad just enough to suffice us.” So he did not seek anything of this life but the minimum of its goodness to suffice his needs. And he said: “Please God make me live modestly and make me die modestly and gather me in the company of the modest.”

An Exposition on Condemning Desire and Greed and a Commendation of Content and Renunciation of what Others Possess

Know that poverty is praiseworthy, but the poor must be content and have no desire for what others have, nor in gaining money by any way.

This will not be possible for him except if he is content with the minimal means of food, clothing and house he has, as well as the inferior quality, because if he longs for more then he will lose the dignity of content. Then he will have degraded himself with greed and desire. Greed and desire would draw him towards evils and committing sin. The son of man is naturally prone to desire, greed and discontent.

The Prophet said: “If the son of man has two valleys of gold, he would seek for himself a third, nothing can fill the insides of the son of Adam except dust, God will relent toward those who repent.”

It was said to one of the wise: “What are riches?” He said: “Less hope and pleasure in being sufficed.”

Mohammad ibn Wasa’a used to wet the dry bread with water and eat it and say: “Whoever is content with this will never be in need of any-one.”

An Exposition on the Treatment of Desire and Greed and the Medicine for Content

Know that this medicine is comprised of three pillars: Patience, knowledge and deeds.

Deeds: Economising in living and reducing spending. Know that what is in content is dignity and what is in desire and greed is humiliation.

One should increase one’s reflection upon the self indulgence of the Jews, Christians, the debased people and the arrogant fools among the Kurdish, and the ignorant Bedouin who have no religion nor reason. Then one should look at the conditions of the Prophets and the righteous and the rightly guided Caliphs and the Companions and those who followed them, and listen to what they said and then set his mind upon choosing whether to be like the debased or to take as one’s example the people who were the best in the sight of God Almighty.

To understand what dangers lie in the amassing of wealth and the risks that accompany it, by means of all this one will be able to attain content.

An Exposition in the Virtues of Generosity

Know that if wealth is lost or never attained, then the servant should be content with less desire for it, and if it was attained then he should be generous and do good and distance himself from miserliness, as generosity is one of the characteristics of the Prophets (peace be upon them) and it is a root of the saving matters in life.

The Prophet said: “Surely God Almighty is Generous and loves generosity, and loves good manners, and hates the inferior of all things.”

Anas said that the Prophet was never asked anything for Islam but he gave it. A man came to him and asked him so he ordered something to be given to him from charity, so he returned to his people and said: “O my people be Muslim! Mohammad gives abundantly.”

Ali (may God honour his face) said: “If life comes to you spend out of it, for it never diminishes and if it goes from you, spend from it, for it does not last.”

Haditha (may God be pleased with him) said: “A man may be wicked in his religion and bad in his living but he be.

An Exposition Condemning Miserliness

God Almighty said: “...And whoever is saved from the greed of his own soul, those they are the ones who prosper.” (Surah 59 verse 9) and He High Exalted also said: “Those who are niggardly with the bounty God has given them should not reckon that it is better for them, but it is evil for them, on the Day of Resurrection they shall have hung around their necks that which they were niggardly with,..” (Surah 3 verse 180) and He High Exalted also said: “Those who are miserly and enjoin miserliness on people, and conceal the bounty that God has bestowed on them,..” (Surah 4 verse 37).

The Prophet said: “Eschew niggardliness, it has destroyed those who were before you, and incited them to spill their blood, and to make lawful their forbidden.” And the Prophet said: “Neither the miser nor the swindler, nor the traitor, nor the cheat will admitted to Paradise.”

Mohammad ibn al Munkadr said: “They used to say, ‘If God wants evil for a people, He makes the worst of them their rulers, and puts their bounty in the hands of their misers.’”

Al Shaabi said: “I do not know which one is deeper in the Hell Fire, the miser or the liar.”

Ka’b said: “Every morning two angels have been entrusted to every person calling: ‘Please God speed the ruin for every miser, and speed replacement for every spender.’”

Abou Hanifah (may God have mercy upon him) said: “I do not see that I can trust the testimony of a miser because his miserliness will incite him to take more than he should in his investigation. So whoever is like this you cannot trust him.”

An Exposition on the Excellence of Those Who Prefer Others Above Themselves

Know that generosity and miserliness are each divided into grades, the highest grade of generosity is al ithar preference. It is when one gives his wealth to others although he needs it. God Almighty has commended the Companions (may God be pleased with them) and said: “...and prefer others above themselves, even though poverty may afflict them...” (Surah 59 verse 9).

Aisha (may God be pleased with her) said: “The Prophet never satiated his stomach for three consecutive days until he departed from this life, had we wished we could have had our fill, but we preferred others to ourselves.”

Umar (may God be pleased with him) said: “A man of the Companions of the Prophet presented me with the head of a sheep, so he said: ‘My brother needs it more than me.’ So he sent it to him. So each of the Companions was sending it from one to the other until it went through seven homes, then it returned to the first one.”

Abbas ibn Daqan said: “No one goes out of this life as he enters it, ex-

cept Bishr ibn al Harith, a man came to him while he was ill complaining of his need, so Bishr took his shirt off and gave it to him and he borrowed a garment which he wore until he died.”

An Exposition on the Treatment of Miserliness

Know that the cause of miserliness is love of money, and the love of money is for two reasons:

1. Love of desires which cannot be reached except with money.
2. Love for money.

The treatment for each of these is the opposite of its cause, so the treatment for the love of desires is to be content with less and to be patient.

And from the useful medicine: To reflect upon the circumstances of the misers, and to abhor their habits.

The Eighth Book

The Condemnation of Prestige and Hypocrisy

An Exposition on the Condemnation of Fame and the Spread of Celebrity

Know that the origin of prestige is fame and celebrity, and it is blame-worthy, but to be praiseworthy is to be unknown, except for the one who God Almighty has made renowned for the purpose of spreading the religion without his seeking fame from it.

Ali (may God honour his face) said: “Be obscure and do not attempt to be famous, and do not elevate yourself in order to be remembered. Learn and conceal, find safety in silence, you will please the righteous people and you will outrage the wicked.”

Ibrahim ibn Adham said: “The one who loves fame is not true to God Almighty.”

Muammur said: “I blamed Ayoub Alsekhtiany because of his long shirt, so he said: ‘The fame was in its length, today it is in its shortness.’”

Al Thawrri said: “They used to hate the fame of dressing well or dressing badly because the eye’s sight is drawn to them both.”

Bishr said: “I have not known any man who loves to be well known except that he has lost his religion and scandalised himself.” He also said: “Any man who loves for the people to know him will not find the sweetness of the Hereafter.”

(May God have mercy upon him and upon all of them.)

An Exposition on the Condemnation of the Love of Prestige

God Almighty said: “That is the Blessed Abode of the Hereafter, We shall assign it to those who do not desire haughtiness for themselves, nor to be corruptive on the earth...” (Surah 28 verse 83). God has categorised

together the desire for corruption and haughtiness and shows that the Hereafter is for those who distance themselves from these desires. And He High Exalted also said: “Whoever desires the life of this world and its splendors, We will pay them in full for their deeds therein without deduction * They are those for whom there is nothing in the Hereafter except the Fire, their deeds therein (in the life of this world) are futile and all that they were doing is in vain.” (Surah 11 verses 15-16)

This also shows the love of prestige as the greatest indulgence of this worldly life's indulgences.

The Prophet (peace and prayers be upon him) said: “Two ravenous wolves sent into the sheep pen will not be faster in destruction than the love of wealth and fame in the religion of the Muslim.”

Know that prestige and wealth are two pillars of this worldly life. The meaning of wealth is to own useful belongings and the meaning of prestige is to own the heart from which you require obedience and magnification. And as the rich are the ones who own dinars and dirhems to attain their intentions, purposes and desires, so the seeker of prestige is the one who owns the hearts of people to attain his control over them for his purpose and intent.

Those who love money seek to own slaves, so the seeker of prestige seeks to slave the free and to control them by owning their hearts, however the slavery of the prestige seeker is yet more dangerous.

An Exposition on the Reasons why Prestige is So Naturally Attractive to the Point that no Heart can Renounce it except by means of Discipline

Know that the reason which makes gold, silver and all kinds of wealth attractive is the same which makes prestige attractive, but that it is more than wealth.

Prestige is preponderant to wealth in three ways: First: Prestige can earn wealth more easily than wealth can earn prestige.

Second: Wealth is exposed to ruin, to be stolen or lost. Rulers and op-

pressors are inclined to take it from you, you need guards, keepers and safe houses and you are exposed to many risks. But if the hearts are owned they are not exposed to any of these evils, for indeed the heart is a fortress, a thief cannot break into it, nor can the hands of any tyrant or oppressor reach it.

Third: Owned hearts grow and increase without any effort, if the heart surrenders to a person and believes in his perfection, the tongues express what is held in the heart.

An Exposition on the Reasons for the Love of Being Praised and Commended and how the Soul is Comforted and Inclined to it and its Hatred of Condemnation

Know that to love being praised and the hearts pleasure of it has four reasons:

First: This is the prime reason: The soul feels perfection in praise, and however much the soul feels of perfection it is comforted and takes pleasure, praise makes the soul of the one who receives it feel it is perfect.

Second: Praising indicates that the heart of the one who is praising is enslaved to the one he praises, and that it has been subjected to his will. Owning hearts is attractive and the feeling it produces is so pleasurable. And for this same reason it hates condemnation and is pained at it.

Third: The commendation of the one who is praising is the cause of catching the heart of everyone who hears it. Praising is attractive while condemnation is bitter to the soul.

Four: Praising indicates that the one who is being praised is bashful, and that the one who is praising is being forced to let his tongue free in commending the praised one, whether voluntarily or forcibly, so bashfulness is pleasurable because of what it denotes of power.

These four reasons can be combined in praising so one's pleasure in it will be greater. Or they may be given separately in which one's pleasure will be less.

The Exposition on how People Differ in Reaction to Praise and Condemnation

Know that people can react in four different ways:

First: That they rejoice in praise and thank the one who praises them, and are angered by condemnation and thus hate the one who condemns. This is the case with most people, and it is the highest degree of iniquity.

Second: That they become secretly upset from condemnation but hold their tongues and senses from retaliation, they internally rejoice and feel comfortable towards the one who praises, but withhold from expressing their pleasure.

Third: This is the first degree of perfection, as for such, it is the same to them if one praises or condemns, they do not become upset at condemnation nor rejoice at praise.

Forth: This is true sincerity in worship that they hate praise and abhor the ones who praise. They know that it is a temptation which can break the back and harm them in religion. They love the one who condemns them as they know that he has guided them to what is important to them and that he has presented them with his good deeds.

An Exposition on the Condemnation of Hypocrisy

Know that hypocrisy is unlawful and the hypocrite is abhorrent in the sight of God, the verses of the Qur'an, the Traditions of the Prophet and the sayings of the Companions testify to that.

As to the Qur'an God Almighty said: "Woe to those who pray * But are heedless of their prayers * Who put on a show of piety." (Surah 107 verses 4-6) And He High Exalted also said: "...and those who plan evil deeds, for them shall be a grievous chastisement, and their planning shall perish." (Surah 35 verse 10) Mujahid said: They are the hypocrites. God High Exalted said: "We feed you only for God's sake, and we do not desire any reward from you nor thanks." (Surah 76 verse 9) So praise of the sincere is purely for God's sake.

As to Tradition, the Prophet said: “The greatest fear I have for you is in minor atheism.” They said: “And what is minor atheism, O Prophet.” He said: “Hypocrisy, God Almighty will say on the Day of Judgment after He punishes the servants for their deeds: ‘Go to those to whom you were hypocritical and see if you can find with them your reward.’”

As to the sayings of the Companions it is related that Umar ibn Khat-tab (may God be pleased with him) saw a man bending his neck down, so he said: “O man with the bent neck, raise you neck up, the fear of God is not in the neck but in the heart.”

Abou Amamah al Bahily saw a man in the mosque crying while prostrating, so he said to him: “Would you have done that if this was your house?”

Ali (may God honour his face) said: “The hypocrite has three signs, he is lazy if he is alone, he is active among the people and he works hard if someone commends him, and he is idle if he is condemned.”

Umar hit a man with his stick, then said to him: “Take revenge from me.” So the man said: “No, I will leave it for God and you.” So Umar said to him: “You have not done anything, either you leave it for me so I will know or leave it for God alone.” So he said: “I leave it for God alone.” So Umar said: “All right then.”

Al Hasan said: “When some of my friends were subjected to speak of wisdom, had they uttered it, it would benefit them and their friends, and nothing prevented them from speaking of it except their fear of fame. And some of them used to pass by a way and seeing an obstacle in the road, nothing prevented them from moving it aside except their fear of fame.

An Exposition on Unperceived Hypocrisy which is more Subtle than the Footsteps of the Ant

Know that hypocrisy is both evident and imperceivable, the evident is the form which incites you to work for it and to tolerate for the sake of its reward, and this is the most evident type. The imperceivable is the form

which does not incite you to work for it, but it detracts from the work by which you seek God's pleasure, such as in the case of the one who spends every night in prayer, striving his utmost, then if he had a guest he busies himself for his guest which takes him away from his prayer. He knows that had it not been for his hope of reward he would not have prayed in front of his guest. What is more imperceivable than that is what effects his deeds whether by reducing them or easing them, but all this is hidden in the heart.

The most evident sign of hypocrisy is for one to have pleasure in making a show of devotion. There maybe a sincere servant devoted in his deeds without a thought of hypocrisy, as he hates and abhors it, and so he perfects his deeds, but if people see him while he is praying or in devotion, this pleases him and comforts him. This pleasure and comfort indicates an the existence of imperceptible hypocrisy from which the pleasure is exuded.

Hypocrisy is deeply hidden in the heart as fire is hidden in the stone, it becomes evident when the people see it, and this is indicated by its effect of pleasure and contentment. And thus hypocrisy is more imperceptible than the footstep of the ant.

Moreover all this makes fruitless the reward of good deeds.

An Exposition on the Cure for Hypocrisy and the Treatment of the Heart from it

We have seen from the aforementioned that hypocrisy makes deeds futile, and it is a reason for one to be abhorred in the sight of God, and that it is one of its most destructive perils. Because of this we must strive in earnest to remove it even if by struggling and tolerating the most difficult hardships.

In its treatment there are two courses of action:

First: In extracting its roots, by renouncing the love of fame, and the desire to be praised and to escape from the pain of condemnation, and the greed for what the people possess.

It is not a secret that mankind always aims and desires the thing which he sees as good and useful for himself, in his condition or in his belongings. If he knows that it is good for his condition but harmful for his belongings this enables him to break his desire for it. Such as in the one who knows that the honey is delicious but it appears to him that the honey has been poisoned, so he turns away from it, thus is the way for breaking this desire in that he knows there is harm for him in it.

As to greed for what people possess, he should understand that God Almighty is the One Who subjects the hearts to give or to withhold, and that the people are subjected to that since there is no sustainer except God High Exalted.

Whoever lusts for what people possess will be humiliated and disappointed, so how would he leave what is decreed by God Almighty and pursue false hopes and corrupt illusions.

Second: In repelling what comes to his mind while he is engaged in worship; and he should also know that the one who disciplines himself has extracted the roots of hypocrisy from his heart by content, breaking any desire for greed, abjuring from notoriety and despising people's praise and condemnation. Satan never leaves him alone during his worship, but he tries to intercept his thoughts by casting some hypocrisy into his heart, so that his inclinations are never diminished and the lusts of the soul are not entirely effaced. For this reason he must strive hard to repel Satan's promptings of hypocrisy.

An Exposition on the Neglect of Devotion in Fear of Hypocrisy and its Evils

Know that some neglect their duties in devotion in fear of appearing hypocritical. This is a wrongdoing which complies with the aims of Satan, because devotion is divided into that which has no gratification in itself, such as praying, fasting, pilgrimage and striving for God's cause, and these are all acts which require struggle with the self. But they become pleasurable when they are met with the praise of the people. The

people's praise is pleasurable when is made openly. And as to what is pleasurable and not physical, but relates to the people, such as being a judge or a ruler, or iman leading the prayer, reminding the people, teaching them and spending money on them, the evil is grievous because its relates to the people and to what it gives of pleasure.

The Ninth Book

The Condemnation of Pride and Conceit

An Exposition on the Condemnation of Pride

God Almighty has condemned pride in many verses of the Qur'an, and has also condemned every arrogant tyrant, He said: "I shall turn away from My Revelations those who behave arrogantly without right on the earth..." (Surah 7 verse 146) and He said: "...thus God sets a seal over the heart of every arrogant tyrant." (Surah 40 verse 35) and He also said: "And they sought a victory, and every arrogant tyrant suffered ignominy." (Surah 14 verse 15) and High Exalted said: "...surely He loves not those who are arrogant." (Surah 16 verse 23) and God Almighty said: "...Indeed they have assumed great arrogance in regard to themselves, and have transgressed all bounds in their rebellion." (Surah 25 verse 21) and High Exalted said: "...Surely those who arrogantly disdain to worship Me shall enter Hell utterly disgraced." (Surah 40 verse 60)

The Prophet (peace and prayers be upon him) said: "Anyone who has in his heart the weight of a grain of mustard seed of pride will not be admitted to Paradise, and the one who has in his heart the weight of a grain of mustard seed of faith will not enter the Fire."

Abou Hurayra (may God be pleased with him) said that the Prophet said: "God Almighty says the pride is My garment and the greatness is My *azar* (waist wrapper) so whoever challenges Me in one of these I will cast him into Hell Fire."

Abou Bakr (may God be pleased with him) said: "No one should disdain any Muslim, so the most humble Muslim is great in the sight of God."

Wahb said: "When God created Eden He looked at it and said: 'You are prohibited to every arrogant one.'"

Mohammad ibn Hussain ibn Ali said: "As much as pride enters the

heart of anyone his mind is diminished by the same amount.”

An Exposition on the Merits of Modesty

The Prophet (peace and prayers be upon him) said: “God Almighty does not increase any servant who is pardoning except in might, and there is no one who has been modest for God’s sake but God elevates him.”

The Prophet said: “Blessed is the one who is modest while he is wealthy, and who spends the money he has lawfully gained, and has mercy towards the modest and the poor, and who has mingled with the scholars and the wise.”

It was narrated that the Prophet was in his house eating with some of his Companions, and a disabled beggar came the door, his disability was of a kind detested by the people but he was permitted to enter, so when he entered the Prophet made him sit upon his legs and told him ‘eat’. A man from Quraish was nauseated and averse to him, so that man of Quraish did not die before he had been stricken with the same disability.

Jesus (peace be upon him) said: “Blessed are the modest in this life, they are the people of high standing on the Day of Judgment.”

Umar (may God be pleased with him) said: “Surely the servant, if he is modest for God’s sake, God will raise his esteem among the people.”

Aisha (may God be pleased with her) said: “You are heedless of the best of worship: it is modesty.”

Al Fudail said when he was asked what is modesty: “To be subjected to the truth and led to it, even if you have heard it from a child you would accept it, and if you have heard it from the most ignorant one among the people, you would accept it.”

Ibn Samak entered upon Harun Al Rashid and said to him: “O Amir of the believers! Surely your modesty regarding your honour is more honourable for you than your honour.” So he said: “What an excellent thing you have said!” So Ibn Samek said: “O Amir of the believers, there is

one who God Almighty has endowed with beauty and modesty in his manner and generosity in extending his hand, he is forbearing with his beauty, and comforts the people with his money, so God Almighty has written him down as the most sincere devotee of God.” Harun Al Rashid asked for ink and paper and wrote down what the man had told him with his own hands.

One of the people said: “As much as you hate the rich people to see you in cheap clothes so should you hate the poor people to see you in expensive clothes.”

Yahya ibn Khalid al Barmaki said: “When the noble man becomes a devotee of God Almighty he becomes modest, and the fool, when he wants to be a devotee he exults himself.”

An Exposition on the Truth Concerning Pride and its Evils

Know that pride is divided into two types, Internal and External: The internal is in the manner of the soul and the external is in the deeds of the extremities.

The internal is more inclined to pride than the external, as deeds are the fruit of manner:

Pride is shown in deeds, when it appears on the extremities it is described as pride, and if it is not evident it is described as inner pride.

Pride cannot be seen except when a person is in the company of others, when he sees himself above them in perfection, then he is described as a proud person.

It is not enough to say that, when he sees himself as great, he is proud, because he might see that there is someone else greater than himself or at least equal.

The Prophet said: “Whoever has in his heart the weight of an atom of pride will not be admitted to Paradise.”

An Exposition on the Condemnation of Conceit and Its Evils

Know that conceit is condemned in the Book of God and in the ordi-

nances of His Messenger, God Almighty said: "...And on the day of Hunain when you were pleased by your great numbers, but it availed you none.." (Surah 9 verse 25) He mentions this in a way of reprimand. And He High Exalted said: "...and they thought that their fortresses would defend them from God, but God's wrath came upon them from where they had not expected..." (Surah 59 verse 2) So God Almighty has answered the unbelievers for their conceit and for their admiration of their own fortresses and strength.

God High Exalted said: "...while they deem that they are working good deeds." (Surah 18 verse 104) This goes back to their self admiration of their own deeds.

Mankind may admire a deed in which he has done wrong, in the same way he admires deeds in which he is right. The Prophet said: "Three are destructive, niggardliness which is obeyed, lusts which are followed and self conceit."

It was said to Abou Thalabah when he mentioned the time towards the end of this nation: "If you see niggardliness obeyed, lust followed and self conceit, then take care of yourself."

Ibn Massoud said: "Destruction is two types: despair and conceit."

Mutrif said: "It is better for me to sleep in the night and awake in the morning remorseful, rather than to spend the night in prayer and in the morning admire myself."

It was said to Aisha (may God be pleased with her): "When is a man offensive?" She said: "When he thinks he is doing good."

An Exposition on the Truth Concerning Conceit

Know that conceit is only when someone sees himself as perfect and holds himself in great admiration, as in the scholar when he sees himself perfect in his knowledge, deeds and wealth, this is shown in two ways:

He is afraid of losing it and worries about being upset by its loss, so that he would no longer be admired.

Or that he is not afraid of losing it, but is overjoyed with it as a blessing from God Almighty to him, and not as an achievement of his own, and so he would not be admired.

There is a third way which is conceit, and this is that he is unafraid about it, but he is overjoyed with it, assured of it, and his joy at it is because it is perfection and blessing, goodness and elevation, not as a gift from God Almighty and a blessing from Him, so his joy at it would be conceit because it pertains to himself and not related to God Almighty or a gift from him. If however his heart believes that it is a blessing from God, and that whenever He pleases He may remove it from him, there is no conceit in him.

Qatadah said: "In the sayings of God High Exalted: "And show not favour, seeking worldly gain!" (Surah 74 verse 6)

The one who prays only for show, his prayer rises no further than his head. That you laugh while you acknowledge your sins, is better than to cry while you show off.

The Tenth Book

The Condemnation of Vanity

An Exposition on the Condemnation of Vanity and its Truth

Know that God Almighty has said: "...so let not this present life deceive you, and let not the Deceiver deceive you with regard to God" (Surah 35 Verse 5) and God Almighty said: "...but you tempted one another, and you hesitated, and doubted, and vain desires beguiled you..." (Surah 57 verse 14) This suffices as to condemn vanity.

The Prophet (peace and prayers be upon him) said: "A wise person is the one who blames himself and forwards deeds for himself after his death, the fool is the one who follows his own lusts and then hopes that God will save him."

All that has been related on the merits of knowledge and on the condemnation of ignorance is evidence for the condemnation of vanity, because vanity is merely a kind of ignorance, as ignorance is to believe a thing and then see it in a different way, so vanity is ignorance. Vanity is that the soul feels settled on what agrees with its lusts and inclines towards them, this is a devious ploy of Satan. Whoever believes that he is right in a falsehood, then he is vain. Most of the people think of themselves as the best while they are wrong, and most of the people are vain, however the kind of their vanity differs, its degrees differ to the point that in some of them their vanity is extreme. The most evident vanity is the vanity of the unbelievers, the wicked and the rebellious.

1. The vanity of the unbelievers: some of them have been deluded by the life of this world and others have been deluded by Satan with regard to God Almighty. They assert that certainty is better than doubt, and this world is certainty but the Hereafter is doubt, so they say they will not forsake certainty for doubt. This is a false comparison like the comparison of Iblis when he said: "I am better than he, You have created me of fire, and You created him of clay." (Surah 38 verse 76)

The treatment for vanity is either by believing and having faith, or by proof.

As to the vanity of the unbelievers regarding God Almighty: the example of which is in their saying by their own tongues to each other: "If God is with us then we are more in the right than the others and we are more favoured and in better circumstances."

This is evident in the sayings of one of the two men who were conversing together, as God Almighty tells us in the Qur'an: "And I do not think that the Hour will come, and even if I am returned to my Lord, I will most surely find a better place of return than this". (Surah 18 verse 36) The interpretation of this, as it was related, is that the unbeliever of the two men, built a palace for one thousand dinars, and bought a garden for one thousand dinars, and employed servants for one thousand dinars, and married a woman for one thousand dinars, and with regard to all this the believer is admonishing him saying: "You bought a palace which will go to ruin, but if you bought a palace in Paradise it would not go to ruin! And you bought a garden which will go to ruin, but if you bought a garden in Paradise it would not go to ruin, and have servants who do not die or go to ruin and a wife who is a joy to behold (*hourri*) who will not die!"

And to all this the unbeliever replied: "There is nothing there like that and all that is said about it is untrue! And even if there is to be something like that, then there will be better than it there for me in Paradise."

2. The vanity of the rebellious among the believers is for their saying that God is generous and that they seek His pardon, they rely upon that and ignore their deeds. This vain idea is attractive to them and they call this vanity: hope.

They think that hope has high esteem in the religion and that the bounty of God is so wide, His mercy so encompassing and His generosity for all, regardless. They consider their rebelliousness an insignificant matter

when viewed in comparison to the extensiveness of God's mercy. They are believers in the Oneness of God, so they hope in God by means of their faith alone. It may be they see the proof for their hope in holding that it is through the righteousness of their fathers, due to their high ranks of righteousness, such is the vain delusion of the Alawite who deluded themselves by claiming relationship to Ali, while they deviate from the way of their fathers in fear, hope and piety, they think they are more honourable in the sight of God than their fathers, while their fathers, in spite of being such pious devotees, were fearful. But they delude themselves completely in thinking they are secure from the punishment of God Almighty, they are wicked and rebellious. This is the epitome of vanity.

The comparison of Satan to the Alawite is that he makes them believe that whoever loves humanity loves his own children and therefore as God loved your fathers so He loves you, thus you do not need to obey Him. The deluded one has forgotten that Noah (peace be upon him) wished to carry his own son on the ark with him, but it was not to be and his son was among the drowned, as the Qur'an tells us: "Then Noah appealed to his Lord saying, "My Lord! my son is a member of my family, and Your Promise is the Truth, and You are the All Wise" * God said, "O Noah! he is not a member of your family, he is unrighteous, therefore do not ask Me about that of which you have no knowledge. I advise you not to be of the ignorant". (Surah 11 verse 45-46)

And that Ibrahim (peace be upon him) sought God's forgiveness for his father, but to no avail. And that our Prophet (peace and prayers be upon him) sought his Lord's permission to visit the grave of his mother to seek forgiveness for her, permission was given for him to visit but it was not permitted for him to seek forgiveness for her, so he sat down on his mother's grave weeping for the tenderness of feeling he had for his mother to the point that everyone with him was reduced to tears.

An Exposition on the Types of Self Delusion and its Groups

There are four types:

First: The knowledgeable people; the groups of self deluded among them:

This group study the sciences of religion and rationalism, and does extensive research and work into these, they neglect their physical extremities and neglect the avoidance of falling into sin and neglect fulfilling their obligations. They have been deluded by their knowledge and think that they have position in the sight of God, that they have attained a level of knowledge for which God will not punish them, but that He will accept their intercession for others, and will not question them about their own sins and wrongdoing. They assert that this is because of their nobility with God Almighty.

Another group study knowledge and deeds and have been constant in fulfilling their evident obligations, they avoid sins but do not examine their hearts to erase the blameworthy traits such as pride, envy and hypocrisy, seeking high regard and position. They have ill will towards their companions and fellows, seeking fame among the people and in the land, some of them may not know that this is condemned, so they are incautiously intent upon it.

Those have embellished their outward appearance and neglected their inner selves. They have forgotten that the Prophet said: "God does not look at your shapes or wealth but what He looks at are your hearts and your deeds." So they concern themselves with their deeds and neglect their hearts, while the heart is the core, for no one will be saved except those who come before God Almighty with a good heart.

Another group know that the inner self is blameworthy according to the religion but because of their conceit they think they are free from it, they regard themselves in such a high regard in the sight of God and think that He will not test them in it, but that He will only test the common people who have not attained their degree of knowledge, and as for themselves they consider they are too great in the sight of God to be tested. When their conceit and pursuit of self glory appears upon them they say: "This is not pride, it is only aspiration for the glory of the religion

and the exhibition of knowledge to help in the religion of God. If I were to wear modest clothes and sit among the modest, the enemies of the religion would rejoice upon that and my humiliation would become the humiliation of Islam.” Such a self deluded one has forgotten that his enemy, of whom his Lord has warned him, is Satan who rejoices at what he is doing and mocks him. He has also forgotten what has been related of the modesty of Companions of the Prophet, of their renunciation and their content at poverty which was to the point that when Umar arrived to Al Shams he was told that his clothes were too modest, so he said: “We are people whom God has honoured with Islam so we do not seek honour in anything other than it.”

Another group who studied knowledge purified their extremities, adorned them with obedience and avoided outward disobedience, and examined the character of the soul and the quality of the heart with respect to hypocrisy, envy, hatred, pride and self glorification.

Another group specialised in philosophy and argument, according to their lusts, and engaged with any who differed with them and followed their contradictions. They strove to perfect the art of debate and divided in this into various divisions.

These are two groups: one is astray and one is guided. Those astray call to other than the sunnah (Tradition of the Prophet) and those who are guided call to the sunnah, vanity is comprehensive upon them all. As for those astray, it is due to their heedlessness and misguidance.

They believe that they will be saved and they comprise many groups who each denounce the other as unbelievers. But as for the guided they have been deluded by their thinking that argument is the most important matter, and that it is the best immolation in the religion of God.

They assert that nobody perfects his religion as long as he does not examine and search, and whoever believes God and His Messenger without searching and examining and finding evidence he is not a believer, or he is not complete in faith, nor is he close to God.

For this false thinking they spend their lives in learning argument and

dispute and in searching for inventions, hallucinations and contradictions. They neglect themselves and their hearts until they become blind and veiled by their sins and faults, whether open or hidden.

Another group engage in admonishing and reminding, the highest ranking among them is the one who speaks on the manner of the soul and the quality of the heart regarding fear and hope, patience and gratitude, reliance and ascetism, certainty and sincerity and truth.

They are deluded in thinking of themselves that if they speak on these subjects and invite people to it, it would mean that they are of these attributes. They are not bound to it in the sight of God except a little, as the common people are. The vanity of these is the worst kind of vanity, because they are highly conceited, they think that as much as they have delved deeply into the knowledge of love so they are beloved of God. Had they not drawn closer to God, they would never have known the meaning of proximity and distance. They see themselves sincere while they are hypocrites.

Another group are the sufis who are the sufis of the time except those who God Almighty has saved, they have been deluded by their dress, appearance and sayings, they emulate the true sufis in their dress and appearance, in their words and manners, customs and expression, in their outward manner, in audition and dance, purity and prayer, they sit upon carpets putting their heads inside their garment openings as if their are in a different dimension, and in their deep breathing and lowering their voices when they speak etc.

These their vanity is evident, their similitude is as an old woman who heard that the brave heroes of the fighters had had their names written in the court (*al diwan*), and each one of them had been presented one country of the empire, so anxious to have one for herself she dressed in armour and wore a helmet and learned some poetry, then she learned to recite the poetry with its rhythm and learnt how to strut about and how to move her hands, and she learned all about their dress and utterances, movements and silence, then she went to the court to have her name writ-

ten on the list of brave fighters and when she arrived there they assembled her in the reception hall and she was ordered to remove the armour and helmet, she was sent to be tested in swordsmanship with the heroes of the battle so that they would evaluate her heroism.

So when she removed her helmet and armour, they found her a very weak old woman who could not bear the weight of the armour and helmet, so it was said to her: “Did you come here to mock the king and his court and to deceive them?” “Take her and throw her in front of the elephant so he may crush her.” So she was thrown to the elephant.

Another group went to further extremes than those in vanity.

Another group claimed that they are knowledgeable and behold the truth.

Another group fell into permissiveness and put away the shariah, rejected the commands and made no difference between lawful the unlawful. Some of them assert that God does not need their deeds so why should they bother with them, and some of them say the people have been commanded to purify the hearts from lusts and the love of this world, and that this is impossible.

Another group went further still than those and avoided any deed and divorced the lawful and engaged solely in examining their hearts.

Another group have straitened themselves regarding food to the point that they demand from it only pure lawful food and neglect watching their hearts and extremities in anything other than this habit.

Another group claimed good manners and modesty and tolerance, so they engaged in serving sufism, they gather people and oblige themselves to serve them and take from this gathering a way to make themselves superior and to collect money. Their only purpose is pride, they feign humility and servitude, while their intention is only to elevate themselves.

Another group engage in discipline and refining the character, to purify the soul from its faults. They delved deeper into this and took the search for the faults of the soul and knowing its deceit to be a science and profession, in reality they were engaged in searching for the faults of others.

**The Quarter of the
Saving
Matters of Life**

The First Book

On Repentance

Chapter One

An Exposition on the Truth of Repentance and its Limit

Know that repentance is an sense which is integrated into three degrees: knowledge, condition and deeds.

Knowledge is first, condition is second, deeds are third. The first obligates the second and the second obligates the third. Obligation is necessary for the continuity of the ordinance of God Almighty is His dominion.

As for knowledge, it is to be cognizant of the grievous harm of sin which is a veil between the servant and His Beloved, so if he is aware of this certain knowledge which effects his heart, the heart is in pain because of it. The heart aches to the same degree as it misses its Beloved. This pain of missing his beloved is called sorrow.

Knowledge is first and is the start of this goodness, and by knowledge I mean, certainty and faith, because faith is belief, sins are destructive poisons, certainty is to confirm belief, dispel doubt and to control the heart, every time the light of faith shines over the heart it kindles the fire of remorse, so the heart is pained when it sees, by the light of faith, that it has been veiled from his Beloved. As the sun rises over the one while he was in darkness, so the light shines when the veil moves.

Knowledge, sorrow and the intention to refrain from committing sin, in the present or in the future, and the will to make amends for the past; these three consecutive definitions are called ‘repentance’.

Frequently repentance is confined to the feeling of remorse alone. And according to this the Prophet (peace and prayers be upon him) said: “Remorse is repentance.”

Sahl ibn Abd Allah al Tostari said: “Repentance is replacing blame-

worthy actions by praiseworthy actions, and this will not be achieved except by seclusion, silence and eating what is lawful.”

The sayings which have been related regarding the limits of repentance are countless.

An Exposition on the Requisites for Repentance and its Merit

Know that the requisites for repentance are evident in the Traditions of the Prophet (peace and prayers be upon him) and in the Qur'an, these are clear to the one whom God Almighty has opened his heart to the light of faith.

The Prophet (peace and prayers be upon him) said: “God is more joyful at the repentance of His believing servant than a man who entered a vast destructive land having with him his she-camel carrying his food and drink, so he put his head down and slept, when he awoke he found his camel gone, he searched for her until the heat and thirst overcame him or God's will was to be done. He said: ‘I better return to the place where I was sleeping and die there’, so he put his head upon his arm and awaited death. Then he awoke and found his she-camel next to him, and his food and drink intact, thus God Almighty is more joyful at the repentance of a believing servant than this man at the return of his she-camel.”

The Tradition and the sayings of the Prophet regarding this are countless and the nation unanimously agree it is an obligation, this means knowing that sins and faults are destructive and distance a person far from God Almighty. For this reason it is an obligation in the religion.

An Exposition on the Acceptance of Repentance when its Conditions are Fulfilled

Know that if you understand the meaning of acceptance you will not doubt that any valid repentance would be accepted. Those who see by the light of their hearts, who take their light from the Qur'an, know that every pure heart is acceptable in the sight of God and will have blessings from God in the Hereafter. It is known that the heart was originally created pure, and every newborn is instinctively pure, but the stain of sin darkens it.

Every pure heart is acceptable in the same way every clean dress is acceptable, our responsibility is to preserve its purity, as for acceptance is has been irrevocably decreed since the beginning that it is called success in His definition: “Indeed successful is he who keeps it pure.” (Surah 91 verse 9)

Whoever imagines that repentance could be valid but unacceptable is as the one who imagines that the sun rises but the darkness does not dissipate, or that the dress is washed clean with the soap but the dirt clings to it.

The similitude of this is as the sins that are heaped upon each other until they become stains on the heart. Any heart in this state cannot return nor repent. The tongue may utter the word of repentance but this is like the one who says he has cleaned the dress but he has not done so.

God Almighty said: “And God is the One Who accepts repentance from His servants, and forgives sins...” (Surah 42 verse 25) and He also said: “The Forgiver of sins, the Acceptor of Penitence...” (Surah 40 verse 3) and there are many other verse similar to these.

The Prophet (peace and prayers be upon him): “God is more joyful at the repentance of any of you...” Joyful is preceded by acceptance, it is the evidence for acceptance and more.

The Prophet (peace and prayers be upon him) said: “If you were to commit sins to the level of the sky then you were remorseful, God Almighty would accept your repentance.”

As for the sayings of the Companions, Said ibn al Maseeb said: “God has sent down His saying: ‘...He is All-Forgiving to those who repent’.” (Surah 17 verse 25) This verse refers the one who persistently commits sins and then repents.

Al Fudail said: “God Almighty said: ‘Give glad tidings to the sinners that if they repent I accept it from them, and warn the truthful that if I put My justice upon them they will suffer.’”

Umar (may God be pleased with him) said: "Sit with the repentant, they have the most sensible hearts."

So if you say: "Do you say what Al Mutazilah (a theological school which introduced speculative dogmatism into Islam) said, in that the acceptance of repentance is an obligation upon God?" I would say, I do not mean what you say in saying repentance is an obligation upon God, except in the one who said: "If the dress is washed in soap it is obliged to be clean, and that if one drinks the thirst is obliged to be quenched, and that if one is deprived of water thirst is obligatory and that if thirst continues death is obligatory, and there is nothing of this in that which Al Mutazilah wishes to oblige upon God Almighty."

Chapter Two

Regarding that which One Repents From: Sins both Minor and Major

Know that repentance is refraining from sins, and you cannot refrain from something unless you recognise it, if repentance is obligatory then what brings you to it is also obligatory. Thus the identification of sins is an obligation.

Sin is all that which is opposed to what God Almighty has ordained in abstention or action. The explanation of this would require us to explain the obligations from beginning to end. That is not what we intend here, but we will indicate the juncture of its parts. May God Almighty guide us to the right by His mercy.

An Exposition on the Division of Sins and the Quality of the Servant

Sin falls into four qualities: the overbearing nature, the satanic nature, the animal nature and the vicious nature. This is because the clay of mankind is a composite of different mixtures, each one of these mixtures in the compound leaves a trace in the same way sugar, vinegar and saffron leave distinct traces.

As for the overbearing nature there branches from it pride, conceit, constraint, vanity, might and indulgence, love of the life, seeking elevation above all others as he wishes to say: "I am your highest lord."

As for the satanic nature there branches from it envy, wrongdoing, deceit, trickery and enjoining wrong.

As for the animal nature there branches from it greed and niggardliness, lust for the two desires which produces adultery, homosexuality and theft, the plunder of the wealth of orphans and striving for desires.

As for the vicious nature there branches from it anger, hatred, physical violence, insult, murder and squandering of wealth.

Know that sins are divided as follows: What comes between the servant and God Almighty and what is related to the rights of others. What is related to the servant, especially in his forsaking prayers, fasting and all obligations pertaining to himself, and what is related to the rights of others such as forsaking *zakat* (alms), killing others, extortion, slander and all things related to the rights of others.

Know that sins are divided into minor and major. People have differed regarding them, some say: “It is neither a matter of minor or major, but everything opposed to God is major.”

God Almighty said: “If you avoid the heinous sins that are forbidden you, We will acquit you of your evil deeds, and admit you in an honourable manner.” (Surah 4 verse 31)

And He High Exalted also said: “Those who shun great sins and shameful deeds, except unintentional mistakes...” (Surah 53 verse 32)

The major sins have three levels:

1. Unbelief
2. Murder
3. Theft of Wealth

An Exposition on what Magnifies the Minor Sins

Know that minor sins develop into major sins by the following causes: repetition and insistence, this is why they say there is no minor sin with insistence, nor major sin with seeking forgiveness. For this reason the Prophet said: “The best of deeds are the those done constantly, even if it is little.”

Major sin is not committed without a previous sin, it is rare to see someone commit adultery suddenly without advances being made, and it is rare for someone to kill another suddenly without fights and enmity taking place beforehand. Every major sin has had a minor sin committed before it.

If a major sin was committed suddenly in isolation without any previ-

ous occurrence of it, it may be that there is more hope of being pardoned for it than a minor one committed constantly.

And it was narrated that: “The believer sees his sins as a mountain above him, he is afraid that it will fall upon him and the hypocrite sees his sin as a fly alighting on his nose, so he brushes it away.”

Among the minor sins are pleasure and rejoicing and considering the ability to commit them a blessing, as well as being heedless that it is the cause of one’s unhappiness.

Ibn Abbas said: “Woe to the learned from his followers, he makes one error and he repents from it, but the people repeat it after him, far and wide, and for evermore.”

Chapter Three

The Perfection of Repentance, its Conditions, and Its Continuity until the End of Time

We have mentioned that repentance consists of remorse which produces resolve. For its perfection there is a sign, and for its continuity there is a condition.

The sign of the correctness of remorse is the sensibility of the heart and heavy weeping.

It was narrated: “Always sit with the repentant, as they have the most sensitive hearts.”

And of its sign is that the bitterness of the sins remain in the heart rather than the sweetness, so he replaces his inclination to sin with abhorrence, and with the desire to repel it.

If you should say that sins are deeds of desire, how then would you feel its bitterness? I would say, the one who ate poisoned honey and did not perceive it in the taste, but found it delicious, then suffered sickness and agony for a long time, his hair fallen, his organs deteriorated, so if honey having a similar poison in it while he was staving and desired something sweet, would he reject this honey or not?

If you say, no, and you reject its appearance and your necessity, but you may reject the honey which does not have any poison in it just because it appears the same. So the feeling of bitterness of the repentant would be likewise. This is because of his knowledge that every sin tastes like honey and its deed is poison.

The condition of propriety regarding what has passed, is that he should turn his reflection to the first day he reached the age of puberty, and search in his memory year by year, and month by month, and day by day, and breath by breath, and see what obligations he has neglected, and which sins he has committed in them.

If he has neglected prayer or prayed in an unclean garment, or prayed without full intention, because of his ignorance of the conditions with regard to intention, or he prayed later than the obligatory time, and if he has doubt as to the number of prayers he has missed since he reached the age of puberty, and he disregarded the number of prayers which he was sure he had performed, and has made up the rest, he has the right to estimate by guessing.

As for fasting, if he has omitted some days of fasting because of travel and he has not made them up, or he has broken his fast intentionally, or he forgot to perform the intention to fast the night before, and he has not made them up, then he should endeavor know the exact number of days missed and strive to make up for them.

As for *zakat* (alms), he must calculate all his wealth and the number of years he has owned it, then pay it by estimating what is due.

As for the pilgrimage, if he was able for some years, but could not travel, and now he is penniless, he must perform it. But if he can not do it because of his poverty, he should endeavor to gain money in a lawful way to suffice his provision, but if he does not have money or a means to earn any, he should ask the people for enough of their *zakat* (alms) or charity to cover only his needs for the pilgrimage.

As for sins, he must search his faculties of hearing and sight, his tongue and his stomach, his hands and feet and private parts and all his extremities, from the time when he attained puberty. Then he must look over his days and hours, and search for all his sins until he finds all of them, both minor and major, then he should see what is between himself and God Almighty with regard to his having oppressed others, then repentance for it comes by remorse and sorrow. Then he should estimate its number and duration, then he should seek to do a good deed to atone for every sin. Then he should perform an equal number of good deeds to those of his sins, according to the saying of the Prophet (peace and prayers be upon him) when he said: "Fear God wherever you may be and follow up an evil deed with a good one, then you will efface it."

As for oppressing people, it is also a sin and an aggression against the ordinance of God Almighty, as God has forbidden oppression.

As for what is committed verbally against people, by talking with people about the faults in others and backbiting, etc. You should seek out all those who you have harmed by your tongue and seek their forgiveness one by one. And whoever of them has died or is absent and cannot be found, the sin of this will only be overcome by increasing your good deeds so that on the Day of Judgment a compensation may be taken from them for it.

As for will power, you should make a firm pledge to God that you intend never to return to sin or the like of it.

An Exposition on the Kind of Person who is in Continual Repentance

Know that the repentant are four types:

First: One who repents from all sins and is constant in repentance until the end of his days.

Second: One who repents and follows the straight path in the core of matters pertaining to the religion and refrains from major indecencies, but some sins he persists in unintentionally, and he is tested by it in the course of his life without having intention to commit them. This type of soul is remorseful.

Third: One who repents and continues without sinning for a while, then the desires overtake him and he commits some sins which he inclines toward intentionally because of desire, this is because of his inability to break his desire, but in spite of the sins he commits he is constant in worship and prayer and refrains from some sin whenever he is able to control his desire which he cannot break.

Fourth: The one who repents and continues for a while then returns back to commit all sins without thinking of repentance, nor remorse for what he has committed. He is fully subject to his desires so he is a confirmed sinner.

Chapter Four

The Treatment for Repentance and the Way to Break the Habit of Sin

Know that people are two types:

First: A young man who has no sensual desire who grows up in goodness avoiding evil such as the one of whom the Prophet (peace and prayers be upon him) spoke: “God wonders at the young man who has no sensual desire.” This type is very dear and rare.

Second: The one who often commits sins. These are divided into those who persist in sin and those who repent.

Our intention is to show the way of treatment and how to break the habit of sin, we mention here the treatment for it. Repentance does not occur except with treatment, and you cannot decide the cure unless you have diagnosed the disease. There is no point in medicine except in that which counters the causes of disease, every disease has a cause, and its treatment is in effacing this cause, the only thing which nullifies a thing is its opposite. There is no cause for insistence in sin except heedlessness and desire, only knowledge can counteract heedlessness and desire can be countered by patience and removing the causes. Heedlessness is the head of the sin. God Almighty said: “...and those, they are the heedless * Without a doubt in the Hereafter they will be the losers.” (Surah 16 verses 108-109) Therefore there is no treatment for repentance except by a mixture of sweetness of knowledge and the bitterness of patience. Thus it should be understood as the treatment of the heart from the disease of persistence.

If you say, “Tell us the way a preacher should follow in the way of preaching with the people?” Know that it is an extensive subject which cannot be covered. But we indicate here the useful methods which can be employed to untie the knot of persistence, and encourage people to refrain from sin.

There are four methods:

1. To remind of the verses in the Qur'an which warn sinners, and to remind of with what has been narrated from the sayings of the Prophet and the Companions.
2. To remind with the stories of the Prophets and the righteous ancestors, and what came to them of catastrophes because of their sins. As in what happened to Adam when he disobeyed God Almighty and how he suffered for his sin by being ejected from Paradise. There are many countless stories which the Qur'an and the Hadith mentioned from which to take admonition.
3. To explain that those whose punishment is hastened in this life rather than in the Hereafter it is better for them, and that every affliction which besets any servant is because of the sins he has committed. There are those who are unconcerned about the punishment of the Hereafter while they are afraid of the punishment of God in this life, this is because of this ignorance.

The Prophet said: "Surely the servant would be deprived of the bounty because of a sin he has committed."

4. To mention to the people about the punishment for major sins, such as intoxication, adultery, theft, murder and backbiting, pride and envy. All these besides many other countless sins. If you mention them to people who are unconcerned, it is like putting the medicine in the wrong person.

The learned people must be like a skillful physician who can diagnose the disease successfully so that he can treat it.

The Second Book

On Patience and Gratitude

An Exposition on the Virtues of Patience

God Almighty has described patience in many ways, and has mentioned patience in the Qur'an in more than seventy instances. He has attached great reward and goodness to it and made it fruitful. Thus God Almighty said: "And when they were steadfast and were certain of Our Revelations, We made from among them Imams guiding by Our Command." (Surah 32 verse 24) And He High Exalted said: "...and perfectly was fulfilled the most fair Word of your Lord upon the Children of Israel, for that they endured patiently..." (Surah 7 verse 137) and He also said: "...and surely We shall reward those who were patient according to the best of their deeds." (Surah 16 verse 96) And He High Exalted said: "These shall be given their reward twice, for that they endured patiently..." (Surah 28 verse 54) and again He said: "...Surely the patient shall be rewarded in full without reckoning." (Surah 39 verse 10)

The reward of every oblation is evaluated except patience, the reward of which is with God Almighty.

As for the Traditions of the Prophet (peace and prayers be upon him), he said: "Patience is half of faith."

He also said: "Having patience in what you dislike is abundant goodness."

Jesus (peace be upon him) said: "You will not achieve what you like except by having patience in what you dislike."

As for the sayings of the Companions, it was found in a letter sent by Umar ibn al-Khattab (may God be pleased with him) to Abi Moussa al-Ash'ari: "Have patience. And know that patience is two, one is better than the other: patience in the face of adversity is good, but patience in what God has forbidden is better than it. And know that patience is the

core of faith, that is because piety is better than righteousness and piety is achieved only by patience.”

Ali (may God honour his face) said: “Faith is built upon four pillars, certainty, patience, jihad and justice.

An Exposition on the Truth of Patience and its Meaning

Patience is a human attribute which cannot be expected in animals or angels. In the case of the animals because they do not possess this faculty and in the angels because they do not have any human failings.

The explanation: The animals are controlled by their desires to which they are subject, they have no other incentive to move or to keep still but desire, they have no will power or self control to restrict their desires in order for them to show patience.

As for the angels (peace be upon them) they have been created solely to praise God Almighty and to be joyous in their nearness to Him. They are not subject to any desire. As for mankind, in his earliest age he does not possess this faculty, like the animals, no desire is created in him except his desire for the food which he needs for survival. Then there consecutively appears in him the desire to play, then the desire for marriage, and he has no power to be patient, in his early age all his power is run by lusts as in the animal. But God Almighty, by His mercy and bounty, has honoured humanity in raising them above the animals, and has entrusted him on attaining puberty to two angels, one to guide him and the other to strengthen him, so he has been distinguished from the animals by the assistance of the two angels. Let us call this attribute in which the human differs from animals in breaking desires, the incentive of religion, and let us call the demand for desires, the incentive of lusts. One should understand that there is a continuous conflict between the incentive of religion and the incentive of lusts, the battleground of this war is in the heart of the servant. The reinforcement of the religious incentive comes from the angels who are the helpers of the party of God, and the reinforcements for the incentive of lust are the satans who are the helpers of the enemy

of God Almighty. Thus patience is the steadfastness of the religious incentive in facing the incentive of lust.

An Exposition on the Types of Patience According to the Variations of Strength and Weakness

Know that the religious incentive, in addition to the incentive of lusts, is three categories:

1. To break the cause of lusts so resistance will not remain. This will be attained only by constancy in patience. Those who attain this level are few, and no wonder that they are the truthful and those in nearness to God Almighty. God Almighty said: "Those who have said: "Our Lord is God", and then have been righteous." (Surah 41 verse 30)
2. The cause of lusts takes precedence and the incentive of religion is lost, such a one hands himself over totally to Satan without resistance and these are the heedless of which there are countless numbers. They are those who are enslaved by they lusts and who permit the enemies of God to control their hearts. To these God has indicated by saying: "If We had so willed, We could have given every soul its guidance (but every soul is entrusted with free will to chose between the Right Way or deviation), But I Ordained: "I shall fill Hell with Jinn and mankind." (Surah 32 verse 13)
3. That the struggle should alternate between the two incentives, the people of this category are those: "And others have confessed their sins, they have mixed a righteous deed with another evil. It may be that God will accept their repentance..." (Surah 9 verse 102).

Patience in what is forbidden is an obligation, and in what is disliked praiseworthy, patience in the forbidden harm is forbidden, such as in the one whose hand or son's hand is going to be severed and he stands in patience, that is forbidden.

As the one who sees his wife or daughter subjected to a situation which touches upon his honour and he says I will bear it patiently, this kind of patience is forbidden. The disliked patience is the patience in

harm which has been inflicted by a cause which is disliked in the Shari-ah.

Second Part: The Book of Gratitude

There are three pillars:

First: On the merits, its truth, parts and rules.

Second: On the truth of bounty, its divisions, private and public.

Third: An expounding on the superior of the two; patience or gratitude.

The First Pillar: Gratitude

An Exposition on the Merits of Gratitude

Know that God Almighty has related gratitude to remembrance: "...Certainly the remembrance of God is greater..." (Surah 29 verse 45) and He also said: "Therefore remember Me, so that I may remember you, and be grateful to Me and do not be ungrateful." (Surah 2 verse 152) and again He said: "And why should God chastise you if you are grateful and believe? (Surah 4 verse 147) and He also said: "...Whoever turns back to disbelief does no harm to God, but God will reward the grateful." (Surah 3 verse 144)

As for the sayings of the Prophet (peace and prayers be upon him) said: "The grateful benefactor is as the one fasts in patience."

And when verses were revealed regarding wealth or treasure, Umar (may God be pleased with him) said: "Which wealth should we take?" So the Prophet (peace and prayers be upon him) said: "You should take a tongue of remembrance and a grateful heart." Thus has he enjoined a heart of gratitude in preference to wealth.

Ibn Massoud said: "Gratitude is half of faith."

An Exposition on the Limits of Gratitude and the Truth Regarding It

Know that gratitude consists of knowledge, condition and deeds.

Knowledge, it is the core which produces the condition, and the condition produces the deeds.

As for knowledge it is identifying the bounties, and the condition is the joy felt in its blessing, the deed is to perform what is intended from The One who bestowed it upon you. That deed is appreciated by the heart, the extremities and the tongue so that gratitude ensues.

If someone says that gratitude is the submissive recognition of the one who bestowed blessings upon you, so he has looked at the acts of the tongue with some of the conditions of the heart.

If someone says that gratitude is to thank the bestower by mentioning his blessing, then he has only looked at the act of the tongue.

If someone says that gratitude is a display in front of others in a way of keeping them away from falling into prohibited deeds and to keep constant in appreciation of God Almighty, then this is a collective explanation of the meaning of gratitude, with the only exception of the deeds of the tongue.

Hamdoun al Qassar said: "Gratitude in return for bounty is to see yourself dependent."

This indicates that the meaning of knowledge is among the definitions of gratitude.

Al Junayd said: "Gratitude is that you see yourself undeserving: indicating to one of the conditions of the heart in particular."

The Second Pillar of the Pillars of Gratitude What Deserves Gratitude

It is bounty, so let us remember what is the truth of bounty, its parts, its degrees, its types, its whole in regard to what is individual and what is collective. To try to number God's bounties upon His servants is an impossible task for humanity. God Almighty said: "...and if you count God's favour, you will never be able to calculate it..." (Surah 14 verse 35)

An Exposition on the Truth of Bounty and its Parts

Know that every goodness, pleasure and happiness, and every necessity and effect is called bounty. But true bounty is the happiness of the Hereafter, and naming anything other than it 'bounty' and 'happiness' is either wrong or metaphorical, as we call matters of worldly happiness which do not help in attaining the bounty of the Hereafter, this is totally wrong.

Know that bounty is divided into what is the necessary objective for itself and into what is needed for this objective, as to the objective, it is the happiness of the Hereafter and it would result in four matters, everlasting continuity, unmitigated joy, pure knowledge, richness where no poverty follows it, this is the true bounty of which the Prophet (peace and prayers be upon him) said: "There is no life but the life of the Hereafter." He said that when they were facing hardship during the excavation of the Trench in order to console his companions. He said this also when they were joyous so that their souls would refrain from indulging in the joys of this life, that was when he was delivering his speech on the farewell pilgrimage.

A man said: "Please God I implore from You complete blessing." So the Prophet said: "Do you know what complete blessing is?" He said: "No." The Prophet said: "Complete blessing is to enter Paradise."

As for the means they are divided into the specific and the more probable, such as the merits of the soul, the merits of the body, and to what is near to it, and to other than the body which is seen to be related to wealth, family and clan and to all other things which attain for the soul guidance.

As for the merits of the soul which draw one nearer to God Almighty, these are four: enlightening knowledge, knowledge of dealing, virtuousness and justice. This does not occur except by the second type which is the virtue of the body, which are four: health, strength, beauty, and long-life. These four will not be shaped except by the third type which is wea-

lth, family, might and an honourable clan. And nothing can be benefitted from these except by the fourth type which are the causes which combine themselves with what suits the merits of the soul, which are four: God's guidance, straightforwardness, pertinence, strength. The essential needs to attain the happiness of the Hereafter are faith and good character, as they are the only means of reaching the happiness of the Hereafter. Mankind will not attain except what he strives for, and no one will receive in the Hereafter except what he extended in the worldly life. Thus the necessary requirement for the merits of the soul is a healthy body with which gain this knowledge and refine the character.

As for the most useful requirement, this is the requirement of the merits of the soul and body for outward bounties such as wealth, might and family. If any of these are missing, defect may pervade the internal merits.

An Exposition on the Examples of God's Bounties

1. The bounty of God Almighty in creating the causes for life.
2. The types of bounties in creating desires.
3. The bounties of God Almighty in creating the ability and the means of moving.
4. The bounties of God Almighty in the origin from which food is gained and made edible.
5. The bounties of God Almighty regarding the causes which bring the food to you.
6. The production of food.
7. The reform of food production.

An Exposition on the Preference of Bounty rather than Trial

Ali (may God honour his face) said: "Please God I implore of You patience." Then the Prophet (peace and prayers be upon him) said: "You have asked God for trial, so ask Him for well being."

Abou Bakr (may God be pleased with him) related that the Prophet said: “Ask God for well being, there is no one who has been given anything better than well being except certainty.” And he indicated to the well being of the heart from ignorance and doubt. The well being of the heart is higher than the well being of the body.

Mutraf ibn Abd Allah said: “For me it is better to have well being and to show gratitude than to be put to trial and to bear patiently.”

The Third Book

On Fear and Hope

An Exposition on the Truth of Hope

Know that hope is among the achievements of those who seek God Almighty and an actuality of those seekers. But it is called achievement if it is proved that someone intends to achieve it, and it is called an actuality if it is transient.

The qualities of the heart are divided into types: one which is not constant, this is called actuality, it applies to every description of the heart. Our purpose here is the truth of hope, hope also is combined of actuality, knowledge and deeds. Knowledge produces actuality and actuality requires deeds, the explanation of hope is: everything which you face whether liked or disliked, divided into present or past, and which you expect in the future, so if what occurs to you existed in the past it is called memory, and if what occurs to you exists in the present time it is called feeling, taste and perception.

An Exposition on the Merits of Hope and Its Encouragement

Know that to do a deed hoping in God Almighty is better than to do it out of fear of Him, because the nearest servant of God is the most beloved of Him, and love supersedes hope. Consider this as two angels, one of them serving in fear of punishment and the other serving in hope of his reward. For this reason there is great encouragement to have hope and optimism even at the time of death, one should not lose hope. God Almighty said: "Say: "O my servants who have transgressed against their own souls, do not despair of God's Mercy, surely God forgives all sins, surely He is the All-Forgiving, the Most Merciful."(Surah 39 verse 53) Thus despair has been forbidden.

It was narrated that God Almighty revealed to Jacob: "Do you know why I parted you from Joseph? It was because you said: 'I fear that the wolf may eat him while his brothers are unaware.' Why did you fear the

wolf and have no hope in Me? Why did you only consider his brothers' heedlessness of him and did not consider My safeguarding him?"

The Prophet (peace and prayers be upon him) said: "None of you should die except in optimism of meeting God Almighty." And he also said: "God Almighty says: 'I am towards My servant as his regard is to Me, so let him regard Me as he pleases.'"

The Prophet (peace and prayers be upon him) entered upon a man while he was on the verge of death, so he said: "How do you see yourself?" He said: "I see that I am in fear on account of my sins and in hope of the mercy of my Lord." Then the Prophet said: "Whatever is contained in the heart of a servant in such a situation, God Almighty grants him what he hopes for and gives him security from what he fears."

Ali (may God be pleased with him) said to a man whose fear led him to despair due to the multitude of his sins: "O you, your despair from the mercy of God, is a greater sin than all your sins."

God Almighty said: "Say: 'O my servants who have transgressed against their own souls, do not despair of God's Mercy, surely God forgives all sins, surely He is the All-Forgiving, the Most Merciful.'" (Surah 39 verse 53)

What is related in this verse in terms of hope is comprehensive.

Abou Ghaffer Mohammad ibn Ali said: "O people of Iraq you say that the most hopeful verse of the Qur'an is: 'O my servants who have transgressed against their own souls, do not despair of God's Mercy'; and we are the family of the Prophet and we say the most hopeful verse in the Book of God is His saying: 'And certainly your Lord shall give you, and you shall be satisfied'." (Surah 93 verse 5)

As to the Tradition, Abou Moussa said that the Prophet (peace and prayers be upon him) said: "My nation which has mercy upon it will not be tortured in the Hereafter, God has hastened its punishment in this world: earthquakes and trials."

It was narrated: "If My servant meets Me while his sins are greater

than the earth, I will meet him with forgiveness equal or more than it.”

As for the sayings of the Companions, Ali (may God honour his face) said: “Whoever commits a sin and God covers him in this life, then God Almighty will be more generous in covering him in the Hereafter, and whoever commits a sin and is punished for it in this life, God is more just than to punish him again for it in the Hereafter.”

Al Hassan used to say: “If a believer had never committed sin he would have been flying in the dominions of the heavens, but God Almighty has weighted him on account of his sins.”

Bakr ibn Selim al Sawwaf said: “We entered upon Malik bin Annas on the evening he died, and we said: ‘O Aba Abd Allah how do you see yourself?’” He said: ‘I do not know what to say to you except that you will see of God’s pardon that which you did not take into account!’ Then we did not leave before we closed his eyes for him.”

Ibrahim al Atroush said: “We were sitting at Diglah in Baghdad with Marouf al Karkhi when a group of youths passed by in a boat playing the tambourine, drinking and jesting. It was said to Marouf: ‘Don’t you see that they are disobeying God openly? Pray to God against them!’ So he raised his hands up and said: ‘My God as You made them rejoice in this life, so make them rejoice in the Hereafter!’ The people said: ‘But we asked you to pray against them!’ He said: ‘If God makes them rejoice in the Hereafter, it means he has relented towards them’.”

Part Two: Fear

An Exposition on the Truth of Fear

Know that fear is a condition which grips the heart and brings about its burning because of an evil that happened to it.

The condition of fear consists of knowledge, actuality and deeds.

As for knowledge it is to be aware of the cause which results in the harm.

Fear may not be a result of a crime or a sin which the fearful one has

committed, but it is attributed to the cause of the fear. Fear of God Almighty is sometimes for the knowledge one has of Him, and knowing His attributes, knowing that if He wishes He can destroy the worlds and nothing would prevent Him from this, and at other times it is for the many disobediences the servant has committed, and other times for a combination of the two reasons.

When knowledge is complete it results in the power of fear which grips the heart, then the effect on the heart spills over the body to the limbs and other parts.

The lessor degrees of fear are those whose influences appear in the deeds: these prevent one from falling into the prohibited, this is called godfearingness.

An Exposition on the Merits of Fear and its Motivation

Know that the merit of fear can be identified by reflection and taking heed, by verses of the Qur'an and Tradition. As to taking heed, its essence is in the merits of enacting the causes which lead to the happiness of meeting God Almighty in the Hereafter.

Fear is the burning fire of desires, as much as there is merit in it, so it burns the desires which will suffice against the committing of any disobedience, thus it is an incentive to obedience, and this varies according to the degrees of desire. How could fear have no merit while chastity and godfearingness occur only in its presence, as well as piety and discipline, and it is of the meritable deeds which draw the servant nearer to God Almighty.

As for the verses of the Qur'an, God Almighty said: "...Guidance and Mercy for those who fear their Lord." (Surah 7 verse 154) and He also said: "Surely those of His servants who have knowledge fear God alone." (Surah 35 verse 28) He described them as knowledgeable because of their fear for Him. And God High Exalted has said: "...God is well pleased with them, and they with Him. This is the reward of one who fears his Lord. (Surah 98 verse 8)

Anything which indicates the merit of knowledge indicates the merit of fear, because fear is the fruit of knowledge. It was narrated that Moses said: "As for the fearful, for them is God Most High, no one to share with them."

When the Prophet (peace and prayers be upon him) was on his deathbed he was given the choice of remaining in this world or of going to meet God Almighty, he said: "I choose You, God the Most High."

Abou Bakr (may God be pleased with him) said: "Whoever is able to cry, let him cry, and if not let him try to."

When Mohammad ibn al Monkadir (may God have mercy on him) used to cry he wiped his face and beard with his tears and said: "I have been informed that the Fire does not eat any part which was made wet with tears."

Ka'b al Ahbar (may God be pleased with him) said: "By the One in hand is my soul, to cry until my tears run down my cheeks is better for me than to give charity equivalent to the weight of a mountain of gold."

An Exposition on the Conditions of the Companions, the Followers and the Righteous Ancestors in their Fearfulness

It was related that Abou Bakr (may God be pleased with him) said to a bird in the air: "I wish I was a bird like you and had never been created human."

Abou Zarr (may God be pleased with him) said: "I wish I was a felled tree."

Ali (may God honour his face) once appeared worried, wringing his hands he said upon completing the salutation after the dawn prayer: "I have seen the Companions of Mohammad peace and prayers be upon him, and I do not see today anyone like them, they used to wake up pale and disheveled, distress between their eyes, while they spent the whole night praying to God, reciting His Book, standing and prostrating until the morning, they praised God Almighty bowing and bending like a tree on a windy day, and their eyes flooding full of tears until their garments

were wet. By God I see the people of today have slept heedlessly.” Then he stood up, and since that time he was never seen laughing until ibn Mulgim struck him with the dagger.”

Moussa ibn Masoud said: “We used when we sat with al Thawri to feel that the Fire was surrounding us, this is for what we saw of his fear and horror.”

Zarr ibn Umar said to his father Umar ibn Zarr: “How does the speaker speak while no one cries? When you speak I hear weeping from every side!” Then he said: “O my son, the weeping widow is not like the rented mourner.”

This is the fear of the Prophet (peace and prayers be upon him) and the righteous and the scholars and the pious, while we are the people who should be more fearful than them. But fear is not produced according to the various senses, but by the purity of the heart and complete knowledge, our serenity is not due to lessons we have learned or how more obedient we are, but our desires have led us and evil overtaken us and hindered us from watching our heedlessness and hard heartedness. The proximity of our departure does not alert us nor do the many sins we have committed, nor has watching the condition of the godfearing instilled in us fear, nor do the dangers of the end worry us. We ask God Almighty to save us by His bounty and guide us to the right way which will cause us to be righteous.

The Fourth Book

On Poverty and Asceticism

An Exposition on the Truth of Poverty and the Verity of the Condition of the Poor and their Attributes

Know that poverty is not having what you need. But not having what you do not need cannot be termed poverty. There exists only One who is rich, and anything else depends on Him for their existence. As God Almighty said: "...And God is All-Sufficient and you are the needy ones..." (Surah 47 verse 38)

This is a general description of poverty and we do not mean here to give the exposition of poverty in general, but poverty from money in particular. The poverty of the servant to supplement all kinds of needs is infinite because his need is immeasurable.

An Exposition on the Merits of Poverty in General

As for the Qur'an God Almighty has said: "It is for the poor emigrants, who were expelled from their homes and their possessions..." (Surah 59 verse 8) and He also said: "Charity is for the needy who are engaged in the cause of God so much that they cannot move about in the land..." (Surah 2 verse 273) In these verses there is direct indication that poverty is praiseworthy.

As to Tradition concerning poverty it has been praised countless times. The Prophet (peace and prayers be upon him) said: "Most surely God Almighty loves the poor and the abstemious who have many dependents."

It was related that the Messiah Jesus (peace be upon him) passed by a sleeping man who had wrapped himself in his cloak, then he woke him up and said: "O you asleep, arise and remember God." So the man said: "What do you want from me? I have left the world for its people." Then Jesus told him: "In this case you should sleep my beloved."

Moses (peace be upon him) passed a man sleeping in the dust, a brick under his head, his face and beard in the dust and wrapping his waist in his waist wrapper, so he said to him: “O my Lord your servant is lost in this world!” God Almighty revealed to him: “O Moses, do you know that I have looked at My servant with all My face, and I have withdrawn this worldly life from him.”

The Prophet (peace and prayers be upon him) said: “Anyone of you who awakes in the morning with a healthy body, secure in his way and having food for his day, he has all the worldly life.”

The Prophet (peace and prayers be upon him) said: “Shall I tell you of the kings of the people of Paradise?” They said: “Yes, O Messenger of God.” He said: “Everyone deemed weak and oppressed, dust ridden with matted hair, ragged and badly fitting clothes, had such a one sworn by God, God would have answered him.”

As for the sayings of the Companions: Abou Darda’ (may God be pleased with him) said: “The one who has two dirhems is more severely charged than the one who has one dirhem.”

Ibn Abbas (may God be pleased with them) said: “Cursed is he who honours the rich and humiliates the poor.”

Luqman (peace be upon him) said to his son: “Do not despise anybody because of his old clothes, your Lord and his Lord are One.”

An Exposition on the Manner of the Poor in his Poverty

Know that the poor have manners in their inner and outer behavior, in their mixing with people, and in their deeds, which they should observe. As to their inner manner they should not hate the poverty which God has tried them with, non acceptance of their trial is unlawful and negates the reward of poverty.

The Prophet (peace and prayers be upon him) said: “O you who are poor, give God Almighty acceptance from your hearts, so that you will gain the reward of your poverty, otherwise there is nothing.”

A superior characteristic is as in the one who does not hate poverty, but accepts it with all pleasure and more superior still is that he asks for it, and even rejoices in it, because of his knowledge of the danger of wealth.

But as for his outer manner he should show abstention and reserve, and he should not display complaint at his poverty, but he should cover his poverty and conceal his covering of it.

The Prophet (peace and prayers be upon him) said: "Most surely God Almighty loves the poor and the abstemious who have many dependents."

God Almighty said: "...the ignorant would suppose them to be well off because of their self-respect..." (Surah 2 verse 273)

In his deeds: his manner is that he should not be humble before a rich person because of his wealth, but he should show him his self pride.

Ali (may God honour his face) said: "The best humility is the humility of the rich towards the poor in hope of the reward of God Almighty. And what is better than that is when the poor man conceals his poverty from the rich in trust of God High Exalted. And less than that is that he does not mix with the rich nor have any desire to sit with them because this is a temptation to greed."

Al Thawri (may God have mercy upon him) said: "If the poor mix with the rich, then know that it is hypocrisy, and if he mixes with the sultan, then know that he is a thief."

His manners in his deeds: he should not slacken in his worship because of poverty, and he should not hinder any effort he can spare. Its merit is more than wealth which has been spent by a wealthy one.

Zayd ibn Aslam narrated that the Prophet (peace and prayers be upon him) said: "One dirhem of charity is better in the sight of God than one hundred thousand dirhems." It was asked: "And how is that, O Messenger of God?" He said: "A man has wealth and spends out of it one hundred thousand dirhems in charity, and a man has only two dirhems and he

spends one dirhem out of it with wholesome pleasure, so the one who spent one dirhem is better than the one who spent one hundred thousand.”

An Exposition Regarding the Prohibition of Begging Needlessly and the Manner of the Poor in Need

Know that many Traditions have been narrated which strongly forbid begging while there are others which permit it. The Prophet (peace and prayers be upon him) said: “For the supplicant is a right even if he comes upon a horse.” Also in the Traditions it is related that the Prophet said: “Return the supplicant even with a burned cloven hoof.”

Begging in essence is strictly unlawful but if one is constrained by necessity it is permissible, as necessity knows no laws.

An Exposition on the People who Beg

Bishr (may God have mercy on him) said: “The poor are three:

1. A poor person who does not beg, and if he is given he does not take, such a one is with the highest ranks in Paradise. (*elliyyyn*)
2. A poor person who does not ask, but if he is given he takes, he is in the Paradise with those closest to God Almighty.
3. A poor person who asks for necessities when he is needy, he is among the truthful of the people of the right.

Therefore there is a consensus that begging is condemnable, although when done out of necessity the degree of this is lowered.

Shaqiq al Balkhi said to Ibrahim ibn Adham when he came to him from Khorasan: “How did you leave the poor among your friends?” He said: “I left them thus, if they were given they were thankful and if they were not given they were patient.” He thought when he described their renunciation of begging that he had praised them highly, then Shaqiq said: “Thus I have left the dogs of Balkh there.” So Ibrahim said to him: “If this is the case with them, then how are the poor in your town?” He said: “The poor with us are thus, if they are not given they are thankful

and if they are given they prefer to give to others.” So he kissed his head and said: “O teacher! You have said the truth.”

An Exposition on the Truth of Ascetism

Know that ascetism in this life is an honourable state of the conditions of those who follow the spiritual path. And this state consists of knowledge, condition and deeds, like other states of being, because all the gates of faith, as the righteous ancestors have said, go back to resolve, expression and deeds. Expression has appeared here in the place of condition, because it shows the inward condition, conversely expression is not an object in itself. And if it did not emanate from of a condition then it would be called Islam (submission to the will of God) and not *Iman* (faith). Knowledge is the cause of a current condition which produces fruit, deeds run second to condition in their fruit.

As to condition we mean here ascetism, this is the renunciation of the desire for something in the hope of something better than it.

God Almighty has said: “And they sold him for a small price, for a few dirhams, and they wished to be rid of him.” (Surah 12 verse 20)

Everyone who has sold this life for the Hereafter is an ascetic in the worldly life. And everyone who sells the Hereafter for this life is also an ascetic, but in the Hereafter.

Know that it is not of ascetism to renounce wealth and the expending of it in disliked ways only in the hope of posing or swaying hearts towards oneself for because of self greed.

These are all of the good habits which have no relationship to worship, they are not from Islam, nor acts of devotion or religious observances, but they are from the worldly customs of the people. Ascetism is to renounce this worldly life because of your awareness of its worthlessness as opposed to the worth of the Hereafter.

An Exposition on the Merits of Ascetism

God Almighty said: “So he went out before his people in all his adorn-

ment. * But those who had been given guidance said. "Woe to you! The reward of God is better for the one who believes." (Surah 28 verse 79-80) Thus God Almighty has related ascetism to those who have knowledge, and this is the highest form of praise.

And God High Exalted said: "Surely We have made whatever is on the earth an adornment for it, that We may test which of them is best in deeds." (Surah 18 verse 7)

It was said that this is a means of seeing who is the more ascetic. Then He described ascetism to be the best of deeds, God High Exalted said: "Whoever desires the tillage of the Hereafter, We shall give him increase in his tillage, and whoever desires the tillage of the life of this world, We shall give him of it, and in the Hereafter he shall have no share." (Surah 42 verse 20) and He said: "And do not even look at the worldly wealth We have let some pairs of the unbelievers (men and women) to gain, it is only the allurement of the life of this world, that We try them with therein, and your Lord's provision is better and everlasting. (Surah 20 verse 131) and again He said: "Those who prefer the life of this world to the life of the Hereafter..." (Surah 14 verse 3)

This the description of the unbelievers, but as for the believer, he is such a one who prefers the life of the Hereafter to the life of this world.

As for the Tradition, there are many narrations concerning the condemnation of this worldly life, but we are going to focus on the merits of abhorrence of this life as a saving matter of life, this is what is intended in ascetism.

The Prophet (peace and prayers be upon him) said: "The one whose aim becomes this life, God will disperse his affairs and sever his livelihood, and make his poverty an anxiety for him, and he will only gain from this life what is fated for him. And the one whose aim is the Hereafter, God will consolidate his intentions and preserve his livelihood and make his prosperity in his heart and the life will be compelled to come to him."

Umar (may God be pleased with him) related a Hadith, saying: “When the verse was revealed: ‘...and those who hoard up gold and silver, and do not expend it in the cause of God...’ (Surah 9 verse 34), the Prophet said: ‘May this life perish, may the dinar and dirhem perish’.” We said: ‘O Messenger of God, God has prohibited us from hoarding gold and silver so what shall we save?’ The Prophet (peace and prayers be upon him) said: ‘Anyone of you should take a tongue of remembrance and a thankful heart and a righteous wife who will enable him in the affairs of the Hereafter’.”

Jesus (peace be upon him) said: “This worldly life is a bridge, so cross it and do not hang on to it.” It was said to him: “O Prophet of God would that you enjoin us to build a house to worship God therein?” He said: “Go and build a house on the water.” They said: “How can we build a house on the water?” He said: “And how would your worship rest with your love of this world?”

Bilal ibn Saad said: “It is enough sin for us that God Almighty makes us renounce this life while we desire it.”

A man said to Sufian: “I would like to find an ascetic scholar.” So he said: “Woe to you! This is a goal of endless pursuit.”

An Exposition on the Signs of Ascetism

It has at its core three signs: The first sign is that he does not rejoice at what he has nor sorrow at what he loses, as God Almighty said: “So that you may not sorrow over what escapes you, nor rejoice over what comes to you.” (Surah 57 verse 23) He should be contrary to that in that he sorrows for having money and rejoices at its loss.

The second sign is that it is equal to him if the people condemn him or praise him, the first is the sign of ascetism in wealth and the second is the sign of ascetism in status.

The third sign is that the best companion for him is God Almighty, and what overtakes his heart is only the sweetness in being obedient, since no heart can be empty of the sweetness of love, be it the love of this

life or the love of God Almighty. Both enter the heart as water and air enter a glass, if the water goes in the air has to come out, they can never be together. Anyone who is a companion of God Almighty, is occupied with that and cannot be distracted by anything else.

For this reason someone said: "What has ascetism led them to?" It was answered: "To the company of God, but the company of this worldly life and of God cannot be combined."

Yahya bin Moaz said: "The sign of ascetism is to be generous in everything you have."

Abou Suliman said: "Wool is a sign of ascetism, so you should not wear wool for three dirhems while in your heart is the desire of four dirhems."

Ahmad ibn Hanbel and Sufian (may God have mercy upon them) said: "The sign of ascetism is less expectation."

Sirri al Saqty said: "The ascetic will never have any good living if he is occupied away from himself, the knowledgeable will not have a good living if he is occupied with himself."

Al Nasr Abazy said: "The ascetic is a stranger in this world, and the knowledgeable is a stranger in the Hereafter."

The Fifth Book

On Divine Unity and Dependence

An Exposition on the Virtues of Dependence

As to the evidence given for it in the Qur'an: God Almighty said: "...and put all your trust in God, if you are believers." (Surah 5 verse 23) And He High Exalted also said: "...and in God let the believers put all their trust" (Surah 14 verse 11). And God Almighty also said: "And whoever puts his trust in God, God will suffice him." (Surah 65 verse 3)

God Almighty said: "...surely God loves those who put their trust in Him." (Surah 3 verse 159) This means that the one who puts his trust in God is honourable and will never be humiliated nor lose. The wise is the one who depends upon Him.

As for the Tradition, ibn Masoud related that the Prophet (peace and prayers be upon him) said: "I was shown the nations on that occasion, and I saw my nation filling the valleys and mountains and I was pleased in their multitude and their appearance, then it was said to me: 'Are you pleased?' I said: 'Yes', it was said: 'In addition to that seventy thousand will be admitted to Paradise without being charged.' It was said: 'Who are they, O Messenger of God?' He said: 'Those who have been branded by the Fire and they did not despair nor sought solace, but they put they trust in their Lord'."

Okasha stood up and said: "O Messenger of God, pray to God to include me among them." The Prophet said: "O God, please make him one of them." Another one stood up and said: "O Messenger of God pray to God to include me with them." The Prophet said: "Okasha got it before you."

The Prophet (peace and prayers be upon him) said: "Had you duly put your trust in God, He would have provided for you as He provides for the bird, it departs in the morning hungry and returns with a full stomach."

As for the sayings of the Companions, Said bin Jubayr said: “The scorpion stung me and my mother swore on me that I should make an incantation, so I stretched my hand which was not stung to the one who made the incantation.”

Yahya bin Moaz said: “In the existence of the servant the undemanded bounty is a proof that the bounty has been ordered to seek the servant.”

Someone said: “Once you have put your trust in God, you will find a way for every goodness.”

An Exposition on the Condition of Dependence

We have mentioned that the state of dependence consists of knowledge, condition and deeds. We have discussed knowledge.

As for condition, the condition is actually dependence, but knowledge is its root and deeds are its fruit, dependence is the heart depending upon the trustee alone, if you know the meaning of dependence, know that this case has in its strength and weaknesses, three grades:

1. It should be his concern to have regard for what is due to God Almighty, and to have confidence in His support and His care and concern to the same degree of the confidence he has in the trustee.
2. This is the stronger: that his relationship with God Almighty is as the relationship between a child and his mother, he recognizes no one but her, and when he is troubled he turns only to her, and he does not rely on anyone but her. When he sees her, he hangs on to her apron strings, and if something happens to him in her absence, his tongue will rush to call to her ‘O mother!’
3. This is the highest: that he should be before God Almighty in his movement and his stillness, just as the dead body is in the hands of the body washer. He does not depart from Him except in that he sees himself as dead and moved by the power of God as the hands of the body washer moves the dead body. This state of dependence induces abstention from supplication and asking, it results from his confidence in His generosity and certainty that He grants better than he asks for. So

He has initiated many bounties before being asked or supplicated, without their being due. The second position does not necessitate forgoing asking or supplicating, but it only necessitates not asking other than Him.

An Exposition on Dependence in Seeking the Causes

We give the following examples:

Know that the similitude of people with God Almighty, is as a group of supplicants who need food, standing in a square on the gates of the palace of the king, so he sends to them many waiters carrying loaves of bread and he orders them to give to some two loaves and to others one loaf, and to make sure that they do not miss anyone. He orders a caller to call to them: "Keep still and do not chase my waiters when they come out to you, but everyone of you should stand in his place as the waiters are subjected and have been commanded to bring the food to you." So whoever chases the waiters and harms them and takes two loaves, then, when the gates are opened and he goes out, I will send after him a waiter who will be entrusted to him until I come to punish him at a time which is known to me alone which I do not reveal, and whoever does not harm my waiters and is content with one loaf from the hand of the waiter while he stands silently, I will ask him to pull out one tooth at the determined time to punish the other, and whoever stands firm in his place but takes two loaves, there is no punishment for him nor will he have any teeth pulled out. But the one whom my waiters missed and nothing reached him from me and he spent his night hungry but was not angry with them, nor says I wish I had a loaf of bread, tomorrow I will appoint him as a minister and appoint him as a trustee over my kingdom."

The case has been divided into four: a party who were taken by their stomachs, so they were heedless of the promised punishment and they said: "From today until tomorrow God will find an exit for us! Now we are hungry." So they ran after the waiters and harmed them and took the two loaves and incurred the punishment at the appointed time and then were remorseful, but their remorse did not benefit them.

The party who refrained from chasing the waiters in fear of punishment, but took two loaves because of their hunger. They were safe from punishment but did not win the pulling out a tooth.

Another party said: "We will sit where we can be seen by the waiters so that they do not miss us, but we will take if they give us one loaf of bread and be content with it so that we may win the pulling out. So they won the pulling out of a tooth."

The fourth party disappeared in the corners of the square and hid from the eyes of the waiters and said: "If they follow us and give us we will be happy with one loaf, but if they miss us we will suffer tonight the pain of hunger, so that we may be strengthened in refraining from anger, then we will gain the ministerial position and draw closer to the king. But that did not benefit them as the waiters followed them to every corner and gave them each a loaf of bread.

This is the similitude of the people, the square is the life of this world, and the gates are death, the unknown time is the Day of Judgment, and the promise of the ministry is the promise of martyrdom for the trusting one if he dies hungry, pleased and content, without having to wait for the appointment on the Day of Judgment. This is because the martyrs are alive with their Lord receiving their bounties, and the one who chased the waiters is the aggressor in the cause, and the subjected waiters are the causes. The people sitting openly in the square to be seen by the waiters are those whose stay in the land was in the engagement in duties and in the mosques in serenity. And those who hid in the corners are the trusting travelers in the towns who the causes follow, the bounty does not come to them except if they make a pledge, so if any one of them dies when he is hungry, happy and content, he will attain martyrdom and be drawn closer to God Almighty.

People are divided into these four parts.

An Exposition on the Manner of Dependence in one when His Possessions have been Stolen

It was related that ibn Umar's (may God be pleased with them) she-camel was stolen, so he searched for her until he was exhausted, then he said: "It is in the cause of God Glory be to Him." Then he entered the mosque and prayed two kneelings, and a man came to him and said: "O you, father of Abd Al Rahman! Your she-camel is in such a place, so he got up and put on his shoes, and said: "I seek God's forgiveness! And he sat down. So it was said to him: "Are you not going to get it?" He said: "I have said that it was in the cause of God."

Thus were the characteristics of the righteous ancestors and likewise was the one who took a loaf of bread to give it to a poor man but could not find him, he was loathe to take it back home after taking it out, so he gave it to another poor man. Such were their deeds with regard to dirhems, dinars and all charity.

It was said to someone regarding something which had been stolen from him: "Are you not going to pray against the one who oppressed you?" He said: "I do not like to be a helper of Satan against him." It was said: "How would it be if it was returned to you?" He said: "I would not take it or even look at it because I have already made it lawful for him."

Some people insulted al Haggag excessively in the presence of some of the righteous ancestors because of his being an oppressor, so he said: "Do not drown yourself in insulting him. God Almighty might take the right of al Haggag from those who have insulted his honour the same way He takes from al Haggag to those from whom he took their wealth and blood."

Ali ibn Fudail had some dinars stolen from him while he was circumambulating the Ka'bah, his father saw him crying and upset, so he said to him: "Do you cry for your dinars?" he said: "No by God, but I am crying for the poor one who is going to be asked on the Day of Judgment and has no excuse."

It was said to someone: “Pray against the one who oppressed you.” He said: “I am too occupied in grieving for him to pray against him.”

These are the characteristics of the righteous ancestors may God be pleased with them all.

The Sixth Book

On Love, Longing, Intimacy and Contentment

An Exposition on the Evidence in the Shariah Regarding the Love of the Servant for God Almighty

Know that the entire nation has agreed that the love of God Almighty and His Messenger (peace and prayers be upon him) is an obligation. How can we demonstrate love by obedience, and that obedience follows love and is its fruit? Love must come first then after that you obey whoever you love. The evidence for proving the love of God Almighty is His saying, Glory be to Him: "...He loves, and they shall love Him..." (Surah 5 verse 54) and He also said: "...but those who believe love God ardently..." (Surah 2 verse 165) This is evidence to prove love and the variations of its degrees.

Abou Bakr (may God be pleased with him) said: "Whoever has tasted the pure love of God, this will occupy him from seeking the worldly life and people would miss seeing him."

Al Hassan said: "Whoever knows his Lord, would love Him, and whoever knows this worldly life would renounce it. The believer never jests or follows his lusts so that he would be heedless, if he meditates he is saddened."

Abou Soliman al Darani said: "Among the creation of God are people who occupy themselves with Paradise and its blessings, so how would they occupy themselves with this worldly life?"

Yahya ibn Moaz said: "A weight of a mustard seed of love is more likable to me than to worship for seventy years without love."

An Exposition on The Causes which Strengthen the Love of God Almighty

Know that the happiest people in the Hereafter are those who are ar-

dent in their love for God Almighty, as the Hereafter is being near to God and feeling the happiness of the encounter with Him, and how great are the blessings of the lover when he meets his beloved one after a time of longing, and finally he is able to see him all the time without any hindrance or fear of being parted.

But this blessing is tempered by the strength of love, whenever love increases, pleasure increases. The servant earns the love of God Almighty only in the worldly life.

When the power of love and its control is absolute it results in self disregard, this is called adoration. Because of this many can not hold to it, it occurs for two reasons.

1. In severing all worldly relations and expelling from the heart any love other than the love of God Almighty: "God has not assigned to any man two hearts in his chest..." (Surah 33 verse 4) The perfection of love is to love God Almighty with all your heart. And if the servant looks at something other than God then a part of his heart is occupied with others, as much as he is occupied with something other than God his love of God is diminished, for this God Almighty said: "...Say, 'God', then leave them to churn in their vain discourses." (Surah 6 verse 91) and also in His saying: "Those who have said: "Our Lord is God", and then have been righteous..." (Surah 41 verse 30)
2. In the strength of love: the strength of knowing God Almighty and the breadth of controlling the heart, this is attained after having purified the heart from all worldly distractions. It is the second part, thus the tree of love and knowledge grows, it is the good word for which God Almighty has set a similitude in Surah 14 verse 24: "Have you not reflected how God has set a similitude? A good word is like a good tree, whose roots are firm, and its branches are in heaven." And He High Exalted implied this in His saying: "...To Him all good words ascend and the righteous deeds raise them up..." (Surah 35 verse 10) This means knowledge.

Nothing conveys this knowledge, after the distractions of this life have severed it from the heart, except complete meditation and the continuous remembrance of God Almighty, to seek Him earnestly, searching to see God in His attributes, in the dominion of His heavens and in all His creation.

An Exposition on God's Love for His Servant and its Explanation

Know that the evidence of God's love for His servants is evinced in the Qur'an in His saying: "...He loves, and they shall love Him..." (Surah 5 verse 54) and He also said: "Indeed God loves those who fight in His cause, in ranks, as if they were a solid wall. (Surah 61 verse 4) and again He said: "...Surely God loves those who repent, and He loves those who are always pure." (Surah 2 verse 222)

God Almighty has refuted those who claim that they are His beloved ones: "Say, "Why then does God chastise you for your sins?" (Surah 5 verse 18).

Anas related that the Prophet (peace and prayers be upon him) said: "If God Almighty loves a servant, no sin can harm him, and the one who repents from a sin is as the one who is free of sin." Then he recited: "...Surely God loves those who repent..." (Surah 2 verse 222) This means that if He loves him He will relent to him before his death so his past sins cannot harm him, no matter how great they are, in the same way that past unbelief does no harm when a person enters Islam.

God Almighty has made His forgiveness of sins a condition of His love as He said: "Say, "If you love God, then follow me, then God will love you and forgive you your sins..." (Surah 3 verse 31)

The Prophet (peace and prayers be upon him) said: "God Almighty said: 'My servant ever approaches Me in his voluntary worship until I love him, so if I love him I will be his faculty of hearing and his sight by which he sees'."

We have demonstrated that the love of the servant for God is true, not metaphorical.

As for the love of God for His servant, it cannot be defined in this way. As God Almighty is the originator of all existence so whatever exists cannot be equal to the One who created it.

Regarding the Meaning of Acceptance of what God has Fated, its Truth and Merit

Know that acceptance is the fruit of love, it is an attribute of the highest grade of those near to God. Its truth is obscure to many people except to those whom God has enlightened in their religion.

Many have rejected what contradicts their lusts saying: "If it is possible to accept everything, this is because it is the act of God, therefore we should accept unbelief and sins." And many have been deluded by this and have seen they should accept wickedness, rebelliousness and abomination, and refrain from its objection, and have seen that this is a way of submitting to the fate of God.

Had these secrets been uncovered to those who confined themselves only to hearing what is known of the Shariah the Prophet (peace and prayers be upon him) would not have prayed for Ibn Abbas saying: "Please my God cause him to comprehend the religion and teach him the explanation."

An Exposition regarding the Stories of the Lovers, their Sayings and Extraordinariness

It was said to some of the knowledgeable (Sufis): "You are a lover." So he replied: "I am not a lover, but I am beloved, the lover is more pained."

It was once said to Abi Yazid al Bastami: "Tell us of what you have seen from God Almighty?" So he screamed at them and said: "Woe to you! It is not befitting for you to know that!" It was said: "So tell us of your struggle with yourself before God?" He said: "And I am also not permitted to let you know of it." It was said to him: "Then tell us about your self discipline when you started?" He said: "Yes, I invited my soul to God Almighty and it ran away from me, so I swore upon it that I will

not drink water for one year nor would I sleep for one year, so it relented.”

Some of the knowledgeable (Sufis) said: “I was shown forty maidens of Paradise, I saw them striving in the air wearing dresses of gold, silver and jewels which flowed and rang out with their movements, so I glimpsed one glance at them and I was punished for forty days. Then I was shown after that eighty maidens of Paradise who were sublime in beauty, and it was said to me: “Look at them!” He said: “I prostrated and closed my eyes during my prostration so that I would not look at them, and I said: ‘I seek refuge in You from other than You, I am in no need of this’, and I remained in continuous devotion until God Almighty sent them away from me.”

In the Traditions, it was narrated that God Almighty revealed to some of His Prophets: “I only take for My friend the one who does not slacken in My remembrance and who has no purpose except Me, and who does not prefer anything in My creation to Me, and if he was burned by fire he would not feel the pain of burning, and if he was cut by the sword he would not feel the sharpness of the cut.”

So whoever does not reach Me with his love overtaking him to that extent, how would he know what is behind the love of miracles.

The Seventh Book

On Intentions, Truthfulness and Sincerity

Chapter One

An Exposition on the Truth of Intention

Know that intention, will and aspiration, are all one meaning, it is a condition and attribute of the heart comprised of two matters: knowledge and deeds.

Knowledge is the primary factor because it is the root of intention. The deeds follow it because they are the branches and fruit. This is why no act is attained except by means of three matters: knowledge, will and ability. Because mankind does not want anything which he does not know, it is necessary for him know, and he will not do anything he does not want to do, so it is necessary to have a will. The will means that the heart is motivated towards the objective, whether immediately or after a delay. Mankind has been created in a way in which all matters are in harmony with him and suit his purposes, but there are some purposes which do not suit him, so he needs to ascertain what are the suitable and to dispel harm from himself. It is necessary for him to have a knowledge and understanding of the things which are either useful or harmful to himself so that he seeks out the one and abandons the other. The one who does not see the food nor knows it cannot eat it, the one who does not see the fire cannot escape from it, this is why God Almighty has created guidance and knowledge and appointed to them causes which are the external and internal senses.

Thus intention is the will and motivation of the soul tempered by the desire and inclination to what suits the purpose, whether immediately or after a delay. The required purpose is the first motivation, which is the incentive, and the incentive is the intended aspiration, the incentive is the aspiration and intention, and the mobilisation of the ability to serve the will by moving the organs and produces the deed.

Chapter Two

On Sincerity

An Exposition on the Truth of Sincerity

Know that everything can be supposed to corrupt others, if it is free of flaw and disposed of, it is called pure, and the pure act is called sincerity. God Almighty said: "...from what is inside their abdomens, coming from a conjunction between the contents of the intestine and the blood, a milk pure and pleasant for those who drink it." (Surah 16 verse 66).

So the purity of the milk should not be polluted by having any impurities in it such as from blood, the contents of the belly, or from anything which can mix with it. Sincerity is contradicted by the sharing of partners with it, thus the one who is insincere is the one who takes partners in his belief. The taking of partners, which is polytheism, is in degrees. Sincerity in the Oneness is contradicted by taking partners with God. Polytheism is either hidden or open, and likewise is sincerity, sincerity and its contradiction are incidental upon the heart, its place is the heart, this is in the intention and aspiration.

So whoever gives in charity and his intention is just for showiness, then he is sincere, and whoever has the intention of gaining the pleasure of God, he is sincere, but usually people have identified the word sincerity with the doing of good deeds whose intention is purely to draw closer to God, atheism is deviation, but it is usually deviation from the truth.

So however much his incentive is to draw closer to God Almighty, if something else comes to his mind besides the incentive, until the work becomes lighter to him due to some other matter, then his deeds are no longer within the limits of sincerity and have become other than purely for God Almighty. Thus polytheism has set upon him.

In total if anything of the things of this worldly life which the soul feels content with and the heart inclines towards, whether small or large, enters into his deeds, his purity becomes occluded and his sincerity is negated.

An Exposition on the Sayings of Scholars Regarding Sincerity

Al Sousi said: "Sincerity is the loss of the ability to see sincerity." As whoever sees in his sincerity that he is sincere, he needs to purify his sincerity. What is indicted here is that the deed should be purified from the admiration of the act as paying attention to sincerity and admiring it is of the evils of the self.

Purity is what is pure from all evil.

Sahl (may God have mercy upon him) said: "Sincerity is that the servant is in his movement and stillness completely and purely for God."

This is what Ibrahim ibn Adham has said: "Sincerity is to be truthful in your intention before God."

It was said to Sahl: "What is most difficult upon the soul?" He said: "Sincerity, because it has no share in it."

About Uthman said: "Sincerity is to forget the sight of the creation and that is done by continuously looking at the Creator."

Someone said: "Sincerity of deeds is that no Satan should know of them so they would not be corrupted nor an angel so he would write them down, it is only an indication to hide it."

It was said: "Sincerity is what is kept from the people, and purified from all evil."

Al Junayd said: "Sincerity is to purify the deed from any tarnish."

Al Fudail said: "Abandoning deeds for the sake of the people is hypocrisy. And working for the sake of people is atheism, but sincerity is that God pardons you from doing both."

There are many sayings on this, and there is no benefit in transmitting all of them, especially after the truth has become clear. The only healing exposition is the exposition of the master of the first and the last, Mohammad (peace and prayers be upon him) when he was asked about sincerity, he said: "That you say: 'My Lord is God', then remain steadfast in worshipping Him as you have been commanded."

This means do not worship your lusts and yourself, but worship your Lord alone, and be constant in worshiping Him as you have been commanded. This is an indication of what true sincerity is.

Chapter Three

On Truthfulness, its Merits and its Truth

The Merits of Truthfulness

God Almighty has described in the Qur'an: "...men who have been true to their pledge to God..." (Surah 33 verse 23)

The Prophet (peace and prayers be upon him) said: "Truthfulness guides to righteousness, and righteousness guides to Paradise, and a man continues to be truthful until it has been written with God that he is truthful. Lying leads to debauchery, and debauchery leads to Hell, and a man continues to lie until it has been written with God that he is a liar."

It is sufficient of the merits of truthfulness that strict veracity is derived from it. God High Exalted has attributed it to his Prophets in praising them: "And mention in the Book Abraham; surely he was a strictly veracious Prophet." (Surah 19 verse 41) and He said: "And mention in the Book, Ismail, indeed he was true to his promise, and he was a Messenger Prophet." (Surah 19 verse 54) and He also said: "And mention in the Book, Idris, he was a truthful Prophet." (Surah 19 verse 56)

Ibn Abbas said: "There are four, whoever has them has won: truthfulness, shyness, good character and gratitude."

Bishr ibn al Harith said: "Whoever deals with God in truthfulness does not need the people."

Abou Soliman said: "Make truthfulness to be your vehicle, and truth your sword, and God your aim."

A man said to a wise man: "I have never seen a truthful man!" He said to him: "If you were truthful you would have recognised the truthful."

An Exposition on the Truth of Truthfulness, its Meaning and its Degrees

Know that the word truthfulness is applied in six ways: Truth in words, truth in intention or will, truth in strength, truth in fulfillment, truth in deeds and truth in achieving the pillars of the religion. Whoever is described as truthful in all these is strictly veracious.

The first truthfulness: a true tongue. Whoever keeps his tongue away from giving any information contrary to what is true, he is truthful

The second truthfulness: Intention and will, this depends on sincerity.

The third truthfulness: Truth in strength, when mankind intends to work he performs it with all his strength.

The fourth truthfulness: Truth in fulfillment. God Almighty said: "...men who have been true to their pledge to God..." (Surah 33 verse 23)

The fifth truthfulness: Truth in deeds. That is the one who strives to his utmost so that his external deeds do not differ from what is inside him.

The sixth truthfulness: This is the highest grade: Truthfulness in achieving the pillars of the religion, such as truthfulness in fear and hope, gratitude and ascetism, contentment, dependance and love. All these attributes have their objective and reality. The really truthful one is he who achieves its realities.

The grades of truthfulness are endless, and the servant might be truthful in some matters and not in others. But if he is truthful in all matters then he is strictly veracious.

Saad ibn Moaz said: "There are three in which I am strong and weak in other than them: since I became Muslim I have never talked to myself during any prayer until I finished it, and I have never walked at a funeral and talked to myself with anything other than what should be said at that occasion until we finished the burial, and whatever I heard from the Prophet (peace and prayers be upon him) I knew it to be true. Then Ibn Maseeb said: 'I thought all these habits would not be together in any one except in the Prophet (*peace and prayers be upon him*)'."

The Eighth Book

On Self Examination and Self Accounting

God Almighty has said: “And We shall set up the scales of justice for the Day of Resurrection, so that no soul shall be wronged in the least, even it be the weight of a grain of mustard seed, We shall bring it forth, and sufficient are We for reckoners.” (Surah 21 verse 47)

He also said: “And the Book of Record shall be put in place, then you will see the guilty in great fear at what is in it, saying, "Woe to us, what is this Book, it does not omit small or great, but it has recorded it!" And they will find all they did presented before them. And your Lord does not deal unjustly with anyone.” (Surah 18 verse 49)

And He High Exalted said: “On the Day when God shall raise them all together, then He shall tell them of what they did. God has kept account of it, while they have forgotten it. And God is Witness over all things. (Surah 58 verse 6)

And He High Exalted said: “On that Day mankind shall issue in scattering to see their deeds * And whoever has done an atom's weight of good shall see it * And whoever has done an atom's weight of evil shall see it. (Surah 99 verse 6-8)

And He High Exalted also said: “And fear a Day when you shall be returned to God, then every soul shall be recompensed in all fairness for what it has earned, and none shall be dealt with unjustly.” (Surah 2 verse 281)

And He High Exalted said: “The Day every soul will find itself in the presence of all the good it has done, and what it has done of evil, it will wish for a great distance between it and the evil it has done. And God warns you to fear Him...” (Surah 3 verse 30)

And He High Exalted also said: “...And know that God knows what is in your hearts, so be aware of Him...” (Surah 2 verse 235).

Those among people who have insight can see that God Almighty is ever watchful of what they are doing and know that they will be questioned and charged for their thoughts and deeds, even if only by the weight of a mustard seed. They are certain that nothing will spare them from being brought to account.

Accordingly there are fully aware that the only saving way for themselves is to be obey God Almighty in what He has commanded of them, and to strive and to persevere patiently as God Almighty said: “O you who believe! Persevere and be patient, hold fast and strengthen each other, and be God-fearing, so that you may prosper.” (Surah 3 verse 200) So first they are steadfast, keep to the principles, then they are self observant and then they bring themselves to account, then they punish themselves, then self discipline, then reprimand themselves.

The First State of Steadfastness Principles

Know that the requirement of those who deal communally in trade is to make sure they have secured a profit when they settle their account, as with the trader who is assisted by his partner, so he hands him his money in order to trade in it, and then he settles the account with him, thus is the mind like the trader on the way to the Hereafter and what he seeks are profits which will purify himself as this will bring him success. God Almighty said: “Indeed successful is he who keeps it pure * And indeed, failed is he who corrupts it.” (Surah 91 verses 9-10)

The Second State of Steadfastness Self Observance

If mankind exercises self control nothing will remain for him to do but to keenly observe it while he is involved in his affairs, because if the soul is disregarded it will become tyrannical and corrupt. Let us mention here the merits of self observance and its degrees.

As for the merits, Gabriel (peace be upon him) asked: “What are the good deeds?” So the Prophet (peace and prayers be upon him) said: “To worship God Almighty as if you see Him.” And the Prophet (peace and prayers be upon him) said: “Worship God as if you see Him, and if you

do not see Him, He sees you.”

And God Almighty has said: “God is the One who brings every soul to account for what it has earned.” (Surah 13 verse 33)

And He said: “Does he not realize that God sees all? (Surah 96 verse 14)

And He also said: “Indeed God is ever watching over you. (Surah 4 verse 1)

Humayd al Taweil said to Soliman ibn Ali: “Admonish me.” He said: “If you have disobeyed God, thinking that He sees you, then you have dared to commit a tremendous sin, and if you thought that He does not see you, then you have become a disbeliever.”

An Exposition on the Truth of Self Observance and its Kinds

Know that the truth of self observance is being aware of the Watcher and thinking of Him constantly. What is meant by this observance is the condition of the heart when it is endued with a type of knowledge, this type produces deeds in the extremities and also in the heart.

Those who are certain of this knowledge are the closest to God Almighty, and they are divided into the strictly veracious and the people of the Right, their observance falls into two kinds.

The first kind is the observance of those closest to God from among the strictly veracious, it is the observance of respect and gratitude, it is that the heart becomes deeply observant in this respect, and humble under its godfearingness, so there is no time for it to think of anything other than that.

The second kind is the observance of the devotees among the people of the Right, they are people who are certain that God Almighty knows their outward and inner selves and that He knows their hearts, they do not concentrate on the observance of respect, but their hearts remain on a middling course and they give themselves times to think of conditions

and deeds, except that while they are performing deeds they are self ob-servant.

The Third State of Steadfastness Bringing the Self to Account

We mention here the merits of self accounting then its truth:

As for the merits: God Almighty has said: “O you who believe! Fear God. And let every soul consider what it has forwarded for the morrow.” (Surah 59 verse 18) This is an indication to bring one self to account for passed deeds, Umar (may God be pleased with him) said: “Bring yourself to account before you are brought to account, and weigh your deeds before they are weighed.”

God Almighty said: “ Surely those who fear God, when an evil suggestion assaults them, they remember God, then they see the right course to adopt.” (Surah 7 verse 201)

An Exposition on the Truth of Self Accounting

Know that as the servant has time at the beginning of the day to set the principles for himself to do the right things, then he should have an hour at the end of the day to bring himself to account for all his deeds, in the same way that the traders do with their partners at the end of every year, month or day.

To slacken is heedlessness, and disappointing, and we seek refuge in God Almighty from that.

We must bring ourselves to account for our entire lives, day by day, hour by hour, with regard to all our deeds, whether hidden or open. Every hour we should charge ourselves in every breath and for every sin committed by the heart or the extremities.

Had the servant thrown a stone into his house for every sin he commits, his house would have been filled with stones in a short time, but he neglects his sins although the two angels are recording them: “... God has kept account of it, while they have forgotten it...” (Surah 58 verse 6)

The Fourth State of Steadfastness Self Punishment

However much anyone brings himself to account he will never escape from committing sin or failing to keep the observances which God has commanded, therefore he should not ignore doing so, because if he abandons it, it will facilitate him to commit all disobedience. Then his soul will become habituated to sin and find it difficult to change, this will be the cause for its destruction, the solution, therefore is that he must punish it. For instance, if he has eaten a doubtful bite of bread with the desire of the soul, then he should punish his stomach with hunger, and if he has looked at the unlawful, then he should punish the eye by preventing it from looking, and thus he punishes every faculty of his extremities in order to break the desires.

These were the habits of those who seek the path of the Hereafter.

It was narrated that Tameem al Dari slept one night without rising for the night vigil, so he spent a whole year rising for the night vigil without indulging in sleep, as a punishment for his deed.

Talha (may God be pleased with him) said: "One day a man took off his clothes and rolled himself in hot embers saying to himself: 'Taste! while the Hell Fire is far hotter than this! You are dead at night, and evil in the day?!'" Thus was the punishment of those who are firm with themselves.

The Fifth State of Steadfastness Self Discipline

It is that when he brings himself to account he sees that he has committed a sin, then it must be punished, as we have mentioned, and if he sees that he is lacking, due to laziness, regarding the merits of the night vigil, then he should discipline himself by increasing the length of the night vigil and train himself to strive harder for his end and the Hereafter to compensate for what he is lacking in. Thus was the way of those who seek the way of the Hereafter.

Umar ibn al Khattab (may God be pleased with him) punished himself when he missed praying with the congregation at the afternoon prayer, by

giving in charity some land he owned which was worth two hundred thousand dirhems.

Ibn Umar used to spend the whole night in night vigil if he missed one prayer in congregation he spent the whole night standing in prayer. One night he delayed performing the prayer at sun set until the two stars rose, so he set free two of his slaves as his punishment.

Ibn Abi Rabbiah (al Harith ibn Abd Allah) missed the two kneelings of the dawn prayer so he set free a slave.

And some of them used to fast for one year, or travel to do the pilgrimage on foot, or give all their wealth in charity, all this is in self discipline in order to save himself.

The Sixth State of Steadfastness Self Reprimand

Know that the worst enemy to you is yourself, which enjoins evil and has been bent on it.

God Almighty said "... indeed the self incites to evil..." (Surah 12 verse 53)

It runs away from good and we have been commanded to purify it, to set it upon the straight path and to discipline it to worship its Lord who created it. You should prevent it from its desires and keep it away from indulging in them, if you ignore it, it will deviate in the wrong direction. But if you reprimand it then it becomes the self-reprimanding soul on which God Almighty vowed: "Nor do I swear by the reproaching soul." (Surah 75 verse 2) and hoped that it will be the soul at peace which will be invited to enter among the servants of God who are happy and pleased in Paradise: "O soul at peace * Return to your Lord, well pleased and well pleasing * Enter you among My servants * And enter into My Paradise!" (Surah 89 verses 27-30).

So never be heedless for even a single moment nor cease admonishing and reprimanding yourself, and do not attempt to admonish someone else before you admonish yourself first.

God Almighty revealed to Jesus (peace be upon him): “O son of Mary, admonish yourself, so when you have been admonished then admonish the people, otherwise be shy of Me.”

God Almighty said: “And go on admonishing, surely admonishment is beneficial to the believers.” (Surah 51 verse 55)

God Almighty said:“ The Reckoning is ever approaching mankind, and yet they turn away in heedlessness; * Whenever there comes to them a renewed Message from their Lord, they listen to it with jesting. * Their hearts diverted, the evildoers whisper to one another: "Is this no more than a mortal like yourselves, will you be taken to sorcery while your eyes are open?" (Surah 21 Verses 1-3)

O soul, know that there is no compensation for religion, nor for faith is there any replacement, the body does not leave anything behind but dust, and whoever takes the night and the day as his vehicle he will be taken to his right way even if he does not move.

O soul, be admonished and take heed of this admonishment, and accept this advice, for the one who turns away admonishment has accepted the Fire.

The Ninth Book

On Meditation

The Merits of Meditation

God Almighty has ordained meditation in countless places in His Glorious Book and He has praised those who meditate, He said: “Those who praise God standing, sitting or lying on their sides, and reflect on the creation of the heavens and the earth, “Our Lord, You have not created this in vain, glory be to You! So save us from the chastisement of the Fire.” (Surah 3 verse 191)

Ata’a said: “I went one day with Ubayd bin Umayr to Aisha (may God be pleased with her) and there was a veil between her and us, so she said: ‘O Ubayd what prevents you from visiting us?’ He said: ‘The saying of the Prophet (peace and prayer be upon him) visit less and you will be liked more.’ Bin Umayr said: ‘Tell us of the most wonderful thing you have seen from the Prophet?’ He said: ‘She cried and said all his affairs were wonderful, he came to me on my night, his skin touched my skin and he said let me worship my Lord, glory be to Him. So he went to the waterskin and made ablution from it, then he stood up in prayer, he cried until his beard was wet with tears, then he prostrated until the earth was wet with tears, then he lay down on his side until Bilal came to raise the call for the dawn prayer, so he said: ‘O Messenger of God, what makes you cry while God Almighty has forgiven your former and latter sins?’ He said: ‘Woe to you Bilal! Why should I not cry when God Almighty has revealed to me tonight: “Surely in the creation of the heavens and the earth and in the disparity of the night and day, there are Signs for those who possess minds.” (Surah 3 verse 190) Then he said: ‘Woe to whoever reads this verse without meditating upon it’.”

Al Hassan said: “To meditate an hour is better than to stand in prayer all night.”

Al Fudail said: "Meditation is a mirror which shows you your good and your evil."

Luqman used to sit alone for a long time, his ward used to pass him by and say: "O Luqman, you are always sitting alone, if you sit with the people it would be better for you." Luqman said: "Sitting in solitude is better for meditation and lengthy meditation is a guide on the road to Paradise."

Ishaq bin Khalaf said: "Dawoud al Ta'i was on the roof one moonlit night, so he meditated on the dominion of the heavens and the earth while he was looking at the sky and crying, until he fell into the house of his neighbour, he said: "The owner of the house jumped out of his bed with a sword in his hand taking him to be a thief, when he found that it was Dawoud he drew his sword back and said: 'Who is it who threw you off the roof.' He said: 'I did not feel that I fell.'"

An Exposition on the Truth of Meditation and its Fruit

Know that meditation is bringing twofold knowledge to the heart to produce from it a third knowledge. The example is that: Whoever inclines towards this life and prefers this worldly life, and wishes to know that the Hereafter is more worthy in preference to this life, he has two ways to see it:

1. To hear from others that the Hereafter is worthy in preference to this life and to imitate and believe him without knowledge as to the truth of the matter, so he inclines by his deeds to prefer the Hereafter depending upon what he has heard alone. This is called imitation and not knowledge.
2. To know the Everlasting is preferable, then to know that the Hereafter is everlasting, so he will gain from this dual knowledge a third knowledge which is that the Hereafter is most preferable.

It is impossible to achieve knowledge that the Hereafter is most preferable except by means of knowledge of the two previous examples.

So attaining knowledge of the two previous examples in the heart to attain the third type of knowledge is called meditation and taking heed, remembering and observing, reflecting and contemplating.

As to reflection, contemplation and meditation they have one denotation, rather than various meanings, but the expressions remembrance, taking heed, and observing, have diverse meanings, even if they stem from one common word the same way the words: sharp, sword and cutter are all one in nature but expressed differently.

The fruits of meditation: These are knowledge, circumstances and deeds, but its special fruit is knowledge alone. If the heart attains knowledge the condition of the heart is changed and if the condition of the heart is changed so the deeds of the extremities change. Thus deeds follow the condition, the condition follows knowledge, knowledge follows meditation. Meditation is the source and the key for all goodness, and in this is manifested the merit of meditation.

An Exposition on the Method of Meditation on the Creation of God Almighty

Know that everything that exists other than God is the work and the creation of God Almighty and every atom of the core and pith and every attribute in everything which is described, there are wonders and mysteries which show the wisdom and ability of God Almighty, His majesty and greatness. To enumerate these is impossible because if the sea were ink it would be depleted before one tenth of a tenth had been recorded, but we only convey here some examples.

We say the creatures that exist are divided as follows: those whose origin is unknown, such we cannot meditate upon. There are so many things in existence which we do not know, as God Almighty has said: "...and He will create what you do not know." (Surah 16 verse 8) and He said: "Glory be to Him, Who created the components of couples of every kind of what the ground caused to grow, and of themselves, (human beings) and of what you do not know. (Surah 36 verse 36) and He also said:

“...and We cause you to grow in that you do not know. (Surah 56 verse 61)

And as for what is known in its origin, but its details are unknown, then we can meditate on its details. This is divided into what is visible and what is invisible, as to the invisible, these are the angels, the Jinn and the satans, the Throne, and other than that. Meditation upon these things is restricted and difficult, therefore it is impossible to meditate upon them so we will leave them and go to what is possible and closer to our understanding, these are the visible, such as the seven heavens and the earth and what is between them.

The heaven can be seen as can its planets, stars, sun and moon, its movement and phases, its rising and setting. The earth is visible with what is in it of mountains, seas, rivers, animals and plants, what is between the sky and the earth is the atmosphere in which we can see its clouds, rains, snow, thunder, lightning and winds. These are all things which are visible of the heavens and the earth and that which is between them, each of them is divided into types and each type is divided into parts, and each part is divided into kinds, with endless subdivision and variation. All this can be meditated upon. God Almighty said: “Surely in the creation of the heavens and the earth and in the disparity of the night and day, there are Signs for those who possess minds.” (Surah 3 verse 190)

And He High Exalted also said: “And from His Signs is the creation of the heavens and the earth, and the diversity of your languages and your colours, surely in that are Signs for those Who possess Knowledge.” (Surah 30 verse 22)

And again He said: “And in yourselves, do you not see? (Surah 51 verse 21)

And God Almighty said: “So did We show Abraham Our dominion over the heavens and the earth...” (Surah 6 verse 75) and no one knows of His Unseen except as He pleases: “He is the Knower of the Unseen,

and He does not disclose His Unseen to anyone. * Except such a Messenger as He is well pleased with..." (Surah 72 verses 26-27)

No one can aspire to count the wonders of the heavens, but meditation upon them is commendable.

The Tenth Book

On Death

Chapter One

On the Motivation for the Remembrance of Death

Know that the one who has been carried away by this worldly life, who loves its pleasures and strives for it earnestly has been deluded. His heart is clearly heedless of the remembrance of death. If he is reminded of it he abhors its mention and retracts from its remembrance. Such are the ones who God Almighty described: "Say: "Surely death, from which you flee, will overtake you, then you shall be returned to the Knower of the Unseen and the Seen, and He will inform you of that which you did." (Surah 62 verse 8)

As for people: either they are occupied with the life or repentant or knowledgeable.

As for the occupied, such a one never remembers death, and if he remembers it, he remembers it only in sorrow of his life and continues to condemn it. To this type of person the remembrance of death only increases him in his distance from God Almighty.

As for the repentant, he mentions death frequently so that fear emanates from his heart, then he fulfills the perfection of repentance. He may abhor death in fear that it might snatch him before he has perfected his repentance and in this he is excused of his antipathy to death. This does not come under the context of the saying of the Prophet: "Whoever hates to encounter God, God hates him when he encounters Him."

As for the knowledgeable, such a one remembers death constantly because it is the time for his encounter with his Beloved, and no lover forgets the appointment with his Beloved. To this kind death does not come quickly enough, he welcomes its arrival, as it permits him to forsake the abode of the sinners and to reach the neighbourhood of the Lord of the Worlds.

An Exposition on the Way the Remembrance of Death is Achieved

Know that death is awesome, and its dangers are manifold, people are heedless of it due to their lack of thought about it. The one who remembers it does not remember it with an empty heart, but a heart which is occupied with the lusts of this worldly life, so the remembrance of death does not affect his heart.

The way to achieve it is that the servant should empty his heart from everything except the remembrance of his approaching death. How often a man remembers another man and thinks of him in his heart, reflecting upon that man's death, imaging his face and remembering upon his activities and the hopes he entertained in living for ever, forgetting death completely, inclining to power and youth in his desire for joy and laughter, and his heedlessness of the certain death which was ever approaching, he remembers how he was moving around and how he is now decomposed, and how he used to speak and how the worms have now eaten his tongue, and how he used to laugh and now the dust has perished his teeth, and how he was preparing enough his money for ten years ahead at a time when his death was only a month away, and how he was heedless of what he needed it for. Until death came to him when he least expected it, so the angel appeared to him and he heard the summons whether to Paradise or to Hell, then he saw himself to be the same as them, and his heedlessness was as their heedlessness and his end would be the same as their end.

Chapter Two

On Excessive Hope and the Merits of Little Hope, the Cause for its Extent and the Way of Curing it

The Merit of Lessening Hope

The Prophet (peace and prayers be upon him) said to Abd Allah ibn Umar (may God be pleased with them): “In the morning do not look towards the evening and in the evening do not look towards the morning, and take from your life for your death, and from your health to your illness, O Abd Allah surely you do not know what your name will be tomorrow.”

Ali (may God honour his face) related that the Prophet (peace and prayers be upon him) said: “The worst thing I fear for you is in two habits, your persuing your lusts and your having excessive hope. As for following lusts it hinders you from the right, and excessive hope is the love for this world.”

Anas said: “The Prophet (peace and prayers be upon him) said: ‘The son of Adam grows old and two habits remain with him, desire and hope’.”

Mutrif ibn Abd Allah said: “If I knew the time of my death I would not be afraid of losing my mind. But God High Exalted, from His kindness to His servants, does not reveal the time of death to His servants, and if it was not for that they would never have enjoyed living nor traded between themselves.”

Al Hassan said: “Adam (peace be upon him), before committing his sin, had his hope behind his back and his time before his eyes, but when he committed sin it changed, so his hope moved between his eyes and his time behind his back.”

Abd Allah ibn Thalabah said: “You laugh and your shroud may have just been woven.”

An Exposition on the Cause of Excessive Hope and its Cure

Know that excessive hope has two causes: ignorance and the love of this life.

As for the love of this life: it is that he enjoys himself with its lusts and joys and fills his heart, so it is difficult for him to draw himself from it. He prevents his heart from thinking of death which is the principle cause to draw himself from lusts. Anyone who hates a thing will distance it from himself. Mankind is fond of vain hopes, so he always gives himself hopes of what suits his lusts and clings to the life is his lust. He lives in illusion giving himself hopes and surrounding himself with the trappings of life as if he will live forever. His heart is filled with worldly anticipation taking him far away from the remembrance of death, and he does not estimate its proximity until death snatches him at a moment he least expects, then he sorrows grievously.

As to ignorance, it is that mankind depends on his youth, so he sees the time of his death as far off. The pitiful one never gives a thought about how many elderly people remain in his town, if he was to count them, they would seem few in number, and it would have then been evident to him that death does not depend on age.

Ignorance of this and the love of life are causes for excessive hope and heedlessness of approaching death.

If you know its cause is ignorance and the love of this world, so its cure is to repel the cause.

As for ignorance, it can be repelled by the pure thoughts which emanate from a good heart, and listening to the wisdom which is issued from it.

As for the love of this world, the treatment for expelling it from the heart is difficult because it is the an incurable ailment in search of whose cure the first and the last of us have been exhausted. The only treatment for it is belief in the Last Day and what is therein of punishment and reward. Whenever one is certain of this, the love of this world would dissipate from the heart.

So we ask God Almighty to show us the life of this world in the way He has shown it to the righteous people among His servants.

Chapter Three

On the Agonies of Death, its Trials and what is Commendable in it

Know that had there not been before the poor servant, apprehension, terror and suffering, the agony of death alone it would have been enough to disturb his living and destroy his content. One wise man said: "You would not know when apprehension from the hands of others is coming to you."

Luqman said to his son: "O my son, you do not know when the matter will encounter you, so be prepared for it before it comes to you suddenly."

An Exposition on What is Commendable to the Dying at Death

Know that it is preferable for the dying to keep a calm and serene disposition, to utter the declaration of faith - 'There is no god but God' - and to have a good expectation of God at heart.

As for disposition, the Prophet (peace and prayers be upon him) said: "Observe the dying in three, if he sweats or his eyes water or his lips stiffen, then it is a mercy from God to him, but if his throat rattles, his colour reddens or his lips turn ashen, then it is a torture from God to him."

As for his tongue, if it utters words of faith then it is a good sign. Abou Said al Khoudariyu said: "Prompt your dying with 'There is no god but God' and it should be prompted in a gentle manner."

The Prophet (peace and prayers be upon him) said: "God High Exalted said I am towards My servants as their thoughts are towards Me, so let them think of Me however they please."

They used to prefer to mention a servant's good deeds to him at his death so that his expectation of his Lord would be good.

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